

WILD WEST



WEEKLY



A MAGAZINE CONTAINING STORIES, SKETCHES ETC. OF WESTERN LIFE.

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Price 5 Cents.

HARRY M. LANE.

YOUNG WILD WEST AND THE CHARMED ARROW; OR, THE WHITE LILY OF THE KIOWAS.

By AN OLD SCOUT.



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Young Wild West and the Charmed Arrow;

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OR,

THE WHITE LILY OF THE KIOWAS.

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CHAPTER I.

THE SEARCH FOR THE WHITE LILY BEGINS.

A few years ago that section of the country that makes up the dividing lines between the States of Colorado, Nebraska and Kansas was almost a trackless wilderness.

While the Indians had been pretty well subdued by the constant advance of civilization, it was not exactly safe at all times for small parties to pass through this particular section of the great and growing West.

It was a warm day in August on which our story opens. The muddy waters of the Arickaree Fork flowed sluggishly, and the willows that lined the bank hung low as though trying to hide their roots from the burning sun.

It was near the hour of noon, and beyond the rippling of the water and the singing of the birds in the grove of cottonwoods that extends to within a few yards of the river bank, not a sound could be heard.

Suddenly the sharp report of a rifle breaks the stillness and the birds are hushed for a second or two, while the rippling water goes right on.

Quickly following the report of the rifle a voice exclaims:

"I've got him, boys! Now, I reckon we'll have bear steaks for supper."

The speaker was a tall, fine-looking man of thirty, attired in a buckskin hunting suit.

He stood with one hand on a tree and the other holding a still smoking rifle, and the look that shone from his eyes

was one of satisfaction, for lying on the ground a few yards off was the carcass of a big brown bear.

The man walked leisurely over to the beast he had shot, and drawing his keen-edged hunting knife, proceeded to bleed the slain bear and remove the pelt.

While he was thus engaged three horsemen came upon the scene, one of them leading an extra horse, which was no doubt the property of the hunter.

Two of the new arrivals were nothing more than boys of nineteen or twenty, while the other was a young man who walked with a decided limp when he dismounted.

One of the boys was very striking in appearance.

Of medium height, square-shouldered and muscular-looking, with a handsome face and fearless, dark eyes, he made a perfect picture of what he was—a true Western boy.

His long, chestnut hair hung down over his shoulders, and the fancy but durable suit of buckskin, trimmed with red fringe, but added to his dashing and commanding appearance.

This was Young Wild West, the Prince of the Saddle, Champion Dead-shot of the West, wealthy mine owner, and a host of other titles that had been given him by the various people he had come in contact with during his adventurous career on the plains and mountains of the Wild West.

He was brave almost to rashness.

The man skinning the bear was Cheyenne Charlie, a former Government scout, who had never been known to flinch in the time of danger.

The others were Jim Dart and Jack Robedee. Jim was

about the age of Wild, and Jack was nearly ten years his senior.

Jack had lost a leg in a fight with some cattle ropers a few months before, and he now wore an artificial limb that, with the exception of a limp when he walked, made him appear as though he had never lost the member of his body, and that he was simply the victim of a sore foot.

Anyhow, Jack had the cork leg encased in a boot, just the same as his good one was, and he could hold his seat in the saddle with the greatest of ease.

These four were the original partners in a rich claim at Weston in the Black Hills, and they had come to the section of country they were now in on a rather peculiar mission.

About two weeks before the opening of our story a gentleman had called upon Young Wild West and, after a long talk and earnest persuasion, induced him to go in search of a white girl, who was supposed to be living with the Kiowa Indians.

She had been stolen from her home when she was a mere child, and would now be about seventeen years of age, so the man, who was her uncle, said.

It was rather a difficult matter to hunt up the girl under such circumstances, the whole thing being based upon supposition, with the exception that it was a known fact that she had been carried off by the Kiowas when a little child.

Young Wild West would never have attempted such a task if he had not heard from an old woodsman but a short time before that there was a beautiful young white maiden living with the Kiowas, and that she was a sort of princess among them, almost ruling them, in fact.

She was called the White Lily, and was so beautiful as to command the respect of the lowest order of mankind.

"She's a white lily for fair," the old woodsman had told Wild, "an' a sight of her would do you good."

So when our hero heard the story of Bascom Walters, the uncle of the stolen child, he was not long in connecting it with the yarn the woodsman had told him of the White Lily of the Kiowas.

And the result was that he set out with his three partners to search for her.

For two days the four had been roughing it on the prairie and in the woods without meeting a human being.

Young Wild West knew they had reached the region that was known as the hunting grounds of the Kiowas, but beyond the fact that they had struck an Indian trail that was days old, there was nothing to indicate that the redskins were in that section.

The Kiowas were supposed at that time to be at peace with the whites.

They were not very friendly toward the Comanches, though, and every now and then there would be a fierce fight between the two tribes.

Sometimes the Government would have to send out troops to quiet these disturbances, and then the result would be a general uprising which would last for several weeks, perhaps.

Things had been very quiet for six months or more in that part of the country, and Wild was in hopes that if

they should find the Lily of the Kiowas, and that she should really be the girl they had come in search of, they would have little trouble in getting her to go to her uncle.

"I guess this is as good a place as any to stop for dinner, boys," remarked Young Wild West, as he loosened the saddle-girths and took the bit from his horse's mouth, so the animal could get a good chance at the succulent grass that grew in abundance in a low, damp spot to the left of them.

"That's right," retorted Jack Robedee, as he followed the example of the young leader.

Soon all four of the horses were tied with lariats where they could get both food and water, after which the three set about to gather up twigs to start a fire on the higher ground.

Meanwhile Cheyenne Charlie went on with his work of skinning the bear.

When he had accomplished this much he cut off the hams, and after washing them in a little brook that was one of the tributaries to the river, he rubbed them with salt and hung them on a convenient limb.

"Ther coyotes kin have ther rest of ther carcass," he remarked, as he fixed the pelt with salt and rolled it up. "While some of ther meat is pretty good that's left there, ther hams are ther main parts of a bear, an' we don't want ther rest of it. I s'pose ther coyotes have got to live, as well as ther rest of us."

Robedee got around remarkably lively for a man with a cork leg.

He always wanted to do the biggest part of the cooking when the four were out together, and he was now busy brewing a pot of coffee and getting some buffalo steaks to broiling.

They did not intend to eat any of the bear meat before supper time, as they wanted to allow the animal heat to get out of it first.

The buffalo had been shot the day before by Young Wild West at a distance of six hundred yards, and they had cut enough of the best meat from it to last them a couple of days.

But Cheyenne Charlie always preferred bear meat to any other kind, and when he had seen the tracks of bruin he had promptly dismounted and started after him.

In a few minutes after our friends had dismounted and picketed their horses a comfortable little camp had been formed in the grove of cottonwoods on the banks of the Arackaree Fork.

Though he did not really think there was any danger of an attack from Indians, Young Wild West advised his companions to keep a sharp watch.

"There is no telling what might happen," he said. "It may be that the Comanches are up this way, and then again, the Kiowas might be in a revengeful mood. We don't want to be surprised by any of them, for that matter, whether they are friendly or on the war-path."

"That's right," retorted Cheyenne Charlie. "Wild, you are always ready to meet friend or foe half way. You wasn't brought up in the wildest part of our big country

for nothin'. You fellers go ahead an' eat your supper; I'll take a little walk around an' see how ther land lays."

The scout picked up his rifle and moved toward the river bank, and the rest started in to eat the meal Jack had prepared for them.

Though they did not swallow their food whole, it did not take them long to eat what they wanted, and then Robedee got up, lighted his pipe, and picked up his rifle.

"I'll take a walk around now to settle my grub, an' give Charlie a chance to eat," he said.

"All right, Jack," answered Wild.

"That's right," spoke up Jim. "It will do your cork leg good to walk on it a little, after being in the saddle all the morning."

Jack laughed.

He never got mad at what any of his partners said about that artificial limb of his.

He had lost the leg, and that was all there was to it.

He was very glad to learn, when he tried the cork member, that he could get along much better with it than he had anticipated, and that was one reason why he always laughed when any one made a remark about it.

Robedee started for the river bank, smoking away and feeling in a very good humor.

He soon saw Cheyenne Charlie coming toward him, and jerking his thumb in the direction of the little camp, he said:

"Go ahead an' git your dinner, Charlie."

"All right," was the reply. "I reckon I'm about as hungry as a feller kin be what always has a good appetite an' goes seven hours without eatin'."

The scout hurried into camp, and Jack moved along up the river, looking around keenly as he blew the tobacco smoke upward in curling rings.

He kept on walking till he reached the edge of the little grove.

Then, after looking both up and down the river, he sat down on a fallen tree.

Jack had not been sitting there long when he noticed a clump of logs floating down the river.

There was nothing peculiar about this, as such occurrences were frequent.

But Jack began to think there was something peculiar about it, for all that.

There were at least half a dozen logs in this particular clump, and they appeared as though they were fastened together.

The logs were lapped over each other at the ends in the down-stream direction, and were raised out of the water a couple of feet or more.

"What in blazes does that mean, anyway?" Robedee muttered, as he knocked the ashes from his pipe. "It looks as though a part of a log cabin has tumbled into ther river. By Jove! I guess that's jest what it is."

Slowly the floating bunch of logs came toward him, and keeping his seat on the fallen tree, he waited.

In another minute it was almost opposite to him, and within a yard of the bank.

Jack got up, and putting away his pipe, walked over to investigate.

Suddenly he gave a start.

If his eyes did not deceive him he saw the outlines of a big canoe through the chinks in the logs.

He raised his rifle, for he instantly realized that there was danger lying in that clump of floating logs.

And so there was, for the next instant a snake-like coil whizzed through the air and a noose caught Jack about the neck and tightened so suddenly that he did not realize what had happened.

Then he was jerked forward into the river with a splash!

When his head came to the surface a second later he saw the ugly, painted faces of two Indians within a foot of him.

The noose was drawn so tightly about his throat that he was in danger of strangulation, so he became an easy prey to the redskins.

They had been lying low in the canoe that was shielded from view by the logs, and with guttural exclamations of satisfaction, they hauled Jack into the canoe.

Between the water that he had swallowed and the extra tightening of the lariat as they hauled him in the little craft, Robedee lost consciousness.

But it was not for long, though, and when he opened his eyes a little later and realized what had happened, he found himself bound and gagged in the stern of the canoe, which was being propelled rapidly up the stream by the two Indians.

"Thunderation!" thought Jack, who was really more surprised than frightened. "This beats anything I ever had to happen to me! These fellows are Kiowas, as sure as I live! I wonder what they want of me, anyhow?"

In five minutes the canoe was behind a bend and well shielded from the view of any one who might be looking from the grove of cottonwoods.

Then the Indians sped the craft along faster, since they were not afraid that the noise they made would be heard.

Ten minutes passed.

The redskins paid not the least attention to their captive, but seemed anxious to get to some particular spot up the river.

He had been a captive many times before, and he knew how useless it was to waste his strength when he was securely bound.

CHAPTER II.

YOUNG WILD WEST FINDS JACK ROBEDEE.

Cheyenne Charlie devoted about ten minutes to the eating of his noonday meal.

"I feel better now," he remarked when he got up. "How long are you goin' to stay here, Wild?"

"Only long enough to give the horses a chance to fill up," was the reply. "I think we had better push on up the

river. We may strike some roving band of Indians, and from them get some information concerning 'the White Lily. At any rate, we will no doubt be able to find out if there is really such a thing as a White Lily among the Kiowas."

"That's so," Jim Dart assented, as he got up from the ground and walked toward the river. "I hope we strike some one pretty soon. This has been quite a tame trip, so far."

"It will be lively enough before we git through, I reckon," remarked the scout. "We're in Injun territory now, an' if we don't have things jumpin' before we leave it I'll miss my guess. I never seen them behave themselves, whether they was at peace with ther palefaces, or whether they wasn't. It's their nature to make trouble, an' jest as quick as they find us ridin' around through here they'll begin to make trouble for us, see if they don't."

"You are right, Charlie," said Young Wild West. "Jim, just call Jack. I guess the horses have eaten enough. Spitfire acts as though he is anxious to be off."

Spitfire was the name of Young Wild West's famous sorrel stallion, a steed that he had tamed and made to do anything that a horse could do.

The sorrel was the swiftest horse Wild or his friends had ever seen, and more than once he had been the means of saving the life of his dashing young rider.

Jim went out to call Jack, while Wild and Charlie got the horses ready.

Jim looked all around, but could not see a sign of Robedee.

Then he began calling him.

But he received no response.

Not only did he become suspicious that something was wrong, but Wild and the scout did, also.

"What's the matter, Jim? Can't you find him?" asked Wild, and he led his horse out of the grove to the river bank.

"No," was the reply. "It is mighty queer where he went. I can't see him anywhere, and he does not answer when I call him. Something must have happened, for Jack would not be apt to stray very far from here, handicapped by his cork leg as he is."

Dart scratched his head in a puzzled manner.

Then Wild tied his horse to a sapling and took a look around.

He was looking for Jack's trail, and soon found it.

He soon saw where he had walked over to the fallen tree, but beyond that he could find no tracks, as the ground between that spot and the water's edge was very hard and dry.

Then he began looking around in the grass a few feet from the fallen tree.

There were no tracks there.

After ten minutes spent in searching and calling, he made up his mind that a very puzzling thing had occurred.

He could not understand it, and neither could Charlie nor Dart.

"It ain't likely that he's climbed a tree an' is playin' a trick on us, is it?" remarked the scout, as he looked into the branches of the cottonwoods searchingly.

"No, Jack wouldn't play any such trick as that," retorted our hero. "There is a good deal of fun in him, but he wouldn't do anything like that. Something has happened to him, you can depend on that, and the thing for us to do is to find out what it is."

"He might have tripped and tumbled into the water," suggested Jim, after a pause.

There was a possibility of this, so they all advanced to the bank and peered into the sluggish stream.

The water was pretty deep right there.

It was riled considerable, and when Wild saw this he thought that Jack might have tumbled in and drowned in some unexplainable manner.

Whipping out his hunting knife from its sheath, he rushed over to a young sapling and cut it off.

It was but the work of a minute to trim off the top, and then dropping to the bank upon his stomach, he began prodding into the river bottom.

But after five minutes of carefully feeling over the bottom, he became satisfied that Jack's body was not there.

When he arose to his feet he happened to look down the stream and see a bunch of logs that had become entangled in some overhanging vines.

A sudden thought struck him.

"Look down there!" he exclaimed. "Those logs are tied together. Who do you suppose could have done that?"

"Do you think ther logs have anything to do with the disappearance of Jack?" Charlie asked in surprise.

"It strikes me that they may have something to do with it. Let us go and examine them."

"I'll stay here with the horses," remarked Jim, who evidently was not of the same opinion as Wild.

Our hero led the way along the bank and soon came to the logs.

It did not take him more than a second to see that they were fastened together with buckskin thongs.

"Look at the knots, Charlie," he said. "That is the work of redskins, as sure as you're born."

"It sartinly is," was the reply, as the scout scratched his head in a thoughtful manner. "But what kin ther logs have to do with Jack not showin' up?"

"A whole lot. In the first place, if the logs were tied together by Indians, there must be Indians near by."

"I see."

"And that being the case, they might have caught Jack napping and carried him off."

"Yes; but there ain't any trail to be found."

"Well, you know as well as I do that a redskin is very handy at covering his tracks."

"That's true enough. But if it was redskins what made Jack disappear, where are they now?"

"That is for us to find out."

The scout was the most puzzled of the two.

While he believed that Wild was about right in his supposition, he could not see how the thing could have been done.

He followed the boy back to where Jim was standing with the horses, not saying another word.

"Well," observed Dart, anxiously, "did you find out anything?"

"Yes; there are redskins close by."

"What!"

"It was a redskin who fastened those logs together."

"Then that accounts for the disappearance of Jack, to a certain extent."

"I think so."

"So do I, now that you have discovered that much. Do you think the reds could have come down the river in canoes?"

"By Jove!" exclaimed Young Wild West, "that is just what I do think."

Cheyenne Charlie's face brightened.

"That looks more like it," he said, nodding to emphasize his words.

All three were of the same opinion now.

"If they came down ther river with them logs to keep any one from seein' 'em, which way do you think they went—up or down?" Charlie asked, after he had thought a moment.

"That is hard to tell," replied Wild. "But I hardly think they would have gone on down the stream, abandoning the logs where they now are, as it is almost opposite the place where we were camped. I rather think they went up again."

"Then we'll follow the river bank in that direction," spoke up Jim. "What do you say, Wild?"

"It is about the only thing to do, I guess. Jack must be found, and that's all there is about it."

As he finished speaking he sprang into the saddle and started along the bank.

His companions quickly followed suit, and the next minute they were proceeding along the river at a sharp trot.

The keen eyes of all three searched the bank and surrounding country.

When they had covered perhaps half a mile Wild suddenly detected a thin column of smoke rising from a clump of trees something like a mile ahead.

"I guess we are on the right track," he said. "See that smoke!"

Charlie and Jim saw it, and they nodded.

"Well, it was a neat thing for ther reds to do, if they come as close to ther camp as that an' got Jack a prisoner without us knowin' it."

"Well, that is just what they did, just the same," replied Jim. "If they had killed him we would surely have found his body."

"That is right," said Wild. "If they had killed him they would have left his body where it could be found by those who were with him. An Indian never covers up a thing of that kind, especially out on the open plains, like this."

The clump of trees in the column of smoke was rising from was really a small grove.

Between it and where our friends were was quite a fringe along the river bank, and toward this they rode at a gallop as soon as Wild gave the word.

In less than half a minute they had reached a point where they could not be seen from the little grove, and once there, the young Prince of the Saddle called a halt.

"Now, then," observed he, "I am going to leave you two fellows in charge of the horses and take a scout over there to see what is going on."

Though they would have liked to go along, neither said anything.

They had a way of always agreeing to anything Young Wild West said, and no matter how they felt over a decision he made, they never showed it.

His judgment could not be beaten, anyway, and none knew it better than they did.

Wild had no sooner dismounted and handed his bridle rein to Jim than he set out for the smoke, picking his way along the fringe of shrubbery that skirted the bank of the stream.

It was less than half a mile to the spot he was heading for, and he wanted to get there as soon as possible.

But, at the same time, he did not want to run the risk of being seen.

That the Kiowas were on the war-path he now felt certain.

And he was also equally sure that Jack Robedee was in their clutches.

Wild made good headway, though there were times when he had to get down low on the ground in order to escape being seen, in case there were Indians watching him from the grove.

In five minutes he was near enough to see the glimmer of a fire, and then the odor of cooking meat came to his nostrils.

Half a minute later he saw the unmistakable forms of Indians moving about through the trees.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, under his breath. "There is a whole lot of them here, and they have got their war paint on, too, for I just caught sight of one of their ugly faces."

Young Wild West was used to taking big risks, and he unhesitatingly began to creep closer to the camp of the red men.

He could see that there were three of them who were evidently on guard, since they were walking lazily back and forth and occasionally looking down the river.

Our hero soon got near enough to see all that was going on in the camp.

He still used extreme caution.

Then almost the first object his eyes rested upon was the form of a white man tied to a stake that had been driven in the ground.

It was Jack Robedee.

A feeling of relief came over him when he saw that Jack was alive.

This was a cause for rejoicing.

As he lay there on his stomach watching, two stalwart Kiowa braves deposited a big bunch of dry brushwood near the captive.

"They are going to burn him alive!" thought Wild.

"Well, I guess they will hear from me before they do it."

CHAPTER III.

JACK ASTONISHES THE REDSKINS.

It was just about fifteen minutes from the time Jack Robedee was caught by the two Indians when the canoe was turned in a little creek and promptly grounded.

"Ugh!" grunted one of the braves, and then he took hold of the captive by the arms and motioned his companion to lend him some assistance.

The almost immediate result was that Jack was lifted out of the canoe and placed upon his feet.

He looked around and saw that he was in a little grove that had an Indian camp in its center.

There were probably forty braves, all of whom were well daubed with war-paint, and half a dozen squaws and a few pappooses to be seen.

The tepees were arranged in irregular form and the camp looked like a new one.

An Indian, who was probably one of the guards, gave a grunt of approval when he saw the white captive being brought into the camp.

He grinned in Indian fashion at Jack, who, in turn made a grimace at him.

Robedee was not frightened, but he was becoming just a little bit nervous.

He wondered if his friends would find out what had become of him, and when he thought of the manner in which he had been captured and brought away from the camp, he was forced to acknowledge to himself that it would be doubtful if they found where he was very soon.

But Robedee placed the utmost dependence in Young Wild West, and he was not going to give himself up as lost until the last moment.

"I didn't have an idea that ther Kiowas was on ther war-path," he thought. "But you kin never trust an Injun, no time, as I've said before."

The guard promptly called the attention of those who were in the camp to the two braves with their prisoner, and then a series of gratified grunts came from the redskins.

One of them, who was evidently the chief, came forward, and after sizing up Jack from head to foot, said:

"Paleface heap much brave; what he do in the hunting grounds of the Kiowas?"

Being gagged, the captive could not answer.

Then the chief ordered the gag to be removed.

As soon as this was done, Robedee answered the question that had been asked him.

"I didn't come in this part of ther country to make war upon ther red man," he said. "I've got some friends close by who kin shoot mighty straight, so you'd better let me go before you git into trouble."

"Ugh!" came from the chief, and then he laughed.

"If you harm a hair of my head you'll be sorry for it," went on Jack, though he realized that what he said had little or no impression on him. "A whole crowd of white men will be after you in less than an hour."

"Paleface heap much lie!" was the retort. "He got three paleface friends who will never find him. They could not hurt Dog-Face; he be glad to catch them. Dog-Face heap big brave; no afraid of fifty palefaces."

The warrior drew himself up proudly as he said this, while Jack forced his face into a grin.

"Well, Dog-Face," he coolly remarked, "I reckon you've been doin' a little spyin' on us, since you've found out how many there is of us. But let me tell you that there are a whole lot more white men around here. We was comin' this way to meet 'em."

At this an ugly look came over the chief's face.

"Palefaces come to hunting ground of Kiowas, so Kiowas make war on them, same as Comanches," he said.

Then he ordered a stake to be driven into the ground, which was done at once.

Robedee was tied to the stake securely so he was in a sitting position on the ground.

He was now becoming very much alarmed.

It was evident that they were going to subject him to some kind of torture.

"See here, you redskins!" he called out, "if you don't let me go there'll surely be trouble."

"Paleface is heap big coward!" retorted Dog-Face. "He must make fun for the squaws and pappooses. He must burn at the stake."

Burn at the stake!

Jack turned pale at the thought, and a shiver ran down his spine.

He could tell by the way the chief said it that he meant it, and nerving himself, he tried hard to think of a way to escape the awful fate.

Suddenly a thought struck him.

His cork leg might be made to save his life.

Jack was very quick-witted, anyway, and in less than two minutes he had decided on a plan of action.

Speaking with as much of a degree of coolness as he could command, he exclaimed:

"You say I am a coward. I say I am not a coward; neither can I be made to beg for mercy from the Kiowas. I kin stand more pain an' laugh over it than any brave you've got!"

Those of the red men who could understand English pricked up their ears when they heard this.

Here was a paleface prisoner who was challenging them to test his ability at standing pain.

It was not generally the way prisoners did.

"The paleface fool does not talk with wisdom when he says he can stand more torture than the red man," said Dog-Face, eyeing Jack curiously.

"Yes, I do speak with wisdom when I say it. I'll make a bargain with you, Dog-Face. I'll let you put my leg in a fire for ten minutes, an' if I holler an' pull it out before that time, you kin finish me any way you wanter. If I don't holler when ther leg is burnin' up, you are to let me go free."

"The paleface talks like a brave man," sneered the chief.

"But I will agree to what he says. The word of Dog-Face is good, and if the paleface stands the fire he shall go free."

Then, at a command from the Kiowa chief, two braves hastened to get some dry brushwood.

When they deposited it upon the ground at his feet Robedee nodded as though he were very confident of getting his liberty when the test had been made.

The chief held a short conference with three or four of those next in rank to him, speaking in their own tongue, and with a look of indifference on his countenance, Jack waited.

He could understand the lingo of the Sioux pretty well, but the Kiowa language was a trifle too much for him, though there was a certain degree of sameness about it, for all that.

Presently Dog-Face knelt down, and with his own hands severed the thongs that bound the captive's ankles.

Jack's ankles had not been tied very tightly together at the start, and this had enabled him to stand on his feet when he was taken from the canoe.

His two captors had dragged him into the camp, and none of the redskins had any idea that he was even lame, much less the possessor of a cork leg.

As soon as the thongs were severed, Jack thrust out the boot that encased the artificial member and observed:

"There you are, Dog-Face! I'm goin' to cripple myself for life, I s'pose, but that's better than dyin'. Go ahead! I won't holler, but I'll laugh an' sing you a song while my leg is burnin' up."

The captive's remarkable display of courage and indifference caused the braves to marvel.

But they were only the more anxious to see the thing through now.

They all thought it was a big bluff that the paleface captive was putting up.

And Jack was much elated at the prospect, though there was a doubt in his mind as to whether Dog-Face would keep his word.

But he had given it, and if he failed to keep it Jack would have done his best, anyway.

The braves got to work, and soon had a nice pile of tinder-like brushwood ready to ignite.

Then the chief took hold of the captive's boot and pulled it around so it rested squarely on the top of the heap.

"Ugh!" grunted the Kiowa, when he had arranged things to his full satisfaction. "Now see how brave paleface is. The squaws will get ready to hear his cries for mercy, and when the fire burns his flesh from his bones they will laugh as they never laughed at a paleface coward before."

Then it suddenly occurred to Dog-Face that it would be best to fasten the foot so it could not be jerked away when the flames came in contact with it.

He gave orders for a small stake to be driven into the ground on either side of the boot, so it could not be moved from one side to the other or drawn back.

And Jack looked on indifferently, wondering where his partners were meanwhile, and hoping for the best.

but it could be spared a great deal easier than his life could.

Everything now being in readiness, the chief gave the word, and one of the braves stepped forward with a burning faggot he had taken from the campfire.

Dog-Face took it from him and applied it to the dry brush.

A curl of smoke went upward, and then every inmate of the camp save the guards gathered around to witness the sport—for cruelty was sport for them.

Once started, the flames took hold quickly, and soon the blaze became so hot that Robedee turned his head from it.

He could smell the burning leather as the fire came in contact with his boot, but that only made him feel more satisfied.

The Indians watched him keenly, for they were certain that the heat must be surely playing havoc with his foot and leg.

But Robedee simply smiled at them, and did not move the member a particle.

"I'll show you that I've got more nerve than a dozen redskins all put together," he said, looking at the chief. "That fire hurts something awful, but you won't see me flinch. Do you want me to sing a little song, or whistle for you?"

A chorus of grunts was the only reply he received.

The fire began to snap and crack at a great rate, while the stench from the burning leather of the boot pervaded the whole camp.

But still the captive sat there on the ground as stoical as any Indian brave of bygone days had stood the torture administered by his enemies.

The Kiowas had never seen the equal of it before, and they simply watched the captive with mute admiration and amazement.

If there is anything that will stir a redskin to a feeling of anything like admiration, it is bravery.

"Well, I ain't hollered yet, Dog-Face," said Jack, after a pause. "My leg is putty near burned to ther bone now; but you ain't goin' to hear me holler. I'm goin' to git my liberty, an' I'll have to go through ther world on one foot after this, I s'pose."

Then he started in to whistling Yankee Doodle, while the flames cracked in a sort of accompaniment.

It was a strange scene, and any one to witness it without the knowledge that the burning leg was an artificial one would have been horror-stricken.

And there was not one of those ignorant children of the forest who did not think the captive was really smiling and joking while his flesh was being burned to a crisp.

Pretty soon Jack noticed that his trousers were burning, so he turned to the chief again and said:

"I don't want to leave your camp without any clothes on, Dog-Face, so won't you stop my trousers from burning any further up?"

After a moment of silence, the chief turned to one of the braves and told him to fetch some water.

As soon as it was brought he poured it on Jack's leg above

He knew he was about to lose a very expensive leg,

the knee, and put out the fire that was beginning to make the captive feel uneasy.

Then a silence followed, during which the faggots burned to a heap of living coals the smoldering cork leg in the center. Jack now began to sing a song he had learned in his youth, and the Kiowa braves and squaws stared at him in amazement.

Pretty soon he gave a kick, and the part that constituted the artificial foot dropped off.

At that moment there was a flutter of excitement in the ranks of the red fiends, and the next instant a beautiful white girl appeared upon the scene.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHARMED ARROW.

Young Wild West, from his place of concealment, had seen and heard everything that was going on.

He could not help laughing softly to himself when he saw how Jack was fooling the Kiowas with his cork leg.

He figured that Robedee's ready wit was going to get him out of the scrape he was in.

The daring young Prince of the Saddle was just figuring on a way to help Jack in case the chief went back on his word, when the white girl emerged from one of the tepees and bounded toward the crowd that was gathered around the captive who had astonished them so much.

Wild saw her before the Kiowas did, and it struck him then and there that she was no other than the White Lily they were searching for.

He became not a little excited when she waved the redskins aside and cut the bonds that held Robedee to the stake with a knife she drew from her bosom.

Dog-Face made a move to stay her, but she waved him back, and in a ringing voice said something to him in the Indian language.

Though this had considerable effect on the chief, it was evident that he did not want to keep the promise he had made to the captive.

The girl certainly made a queenly picture as she stood there, and Young Wild West wondered how it was that she wore the garb of civilization, since, if it was the White Lily of the Kiowas, she had been reared among such uncouth and savage people.

He could not understand all that was being said, but he saw that the girl was going to win the day.

And this was indeed the case, for the chief soon gave way to her, and then she turned to one of the braves and gave him a command.

The result was that a horse was brought out and the bridle rein handed to her.

Then turning to Jack, who had risen to his one foot and stood holding fast to the stake he had been bound to, she said in fairly good English:

"Mount this horse and ride away to your friends. You must not come to the hunting grounds of the Kiowas."

"Thank you, miss," retorted Jack, politely. "May I ask who you are?"

"I am the White Lily of the Kiowas," she answered with a certain degree of pride. "Now begone!"

Robedee waited to hear no more.

He hopped to the horse and was in the act of mounting when a rifle shot rang out.

The bullet grazed his head and found a lodgment in the horse's body, just behind the left shoulder.

With a cry that was almost human the animal plunged forward a few steps and fell dead to the ground.

Then half a dozen Indians seized Jack and bore him into one of the larger tepees.

Dog-Face had turned against the White Lily, after all, for it was he who fired the shot that was meant for Jack.

And seeing that he had missed, he was bound to have the captive, so he gave a hurried command for him to be seized and brought to his tepee.

And Robedee was not yet in the tepee when a rifle began cracking right in the midst of the excited Indians, half of whom seemed to be in favor of what their chief had done, and the rest leaning toward the White Lily.

It was Young Wild West who was doing the shooting now, and three redskins bit the dust in as many seconds.

He had been so surprised at the sudden change in affairs that he had failed to get his rifle to his shoulder in time to drop the chief.

The girl seemed to be in a great state of excitement.

She called loudly to the braves in their own tongue, but seeing that none of them took heed to her now that an attack had been made upon them by an unseen foe, she hurried into the tepee she had emerged from when she came out to interfere in the behalf of Jack.

Meanwhile Wild had got himself into a regular hornets' nest.

Regardless of the deadly fire he was pouring into their midst, a dozen of them made a bolt for the place the shots came from.

He thought it best to flee, and he turned to do so.

But he had not taken more than three steps when his foot caught upon the root of a tree and he pitched forward on his face.

Yelling in triumph, the Kiowas threw themselves upon him.

The boy realized that he had made a mistake in firing upon the red demons, as he had not benefited Jack in the least, and now he was in serious trouble.

His stumbling had been the means of placing him in the hands of the Kiowas, for he had not the least chance to put up a fight, so quickly did they spring upon him.

He was quickly disarmed and dragged to a tree in front of which lay the dead horse.

The chief came running to the scene now, and when he saw that another paleface had been caught he gave the war-whoop of his tribe and executed a few steps of the war-dance.

A rope was quickly brought from one of the tepees and

then Wild was backed against the tree tightly and his hands drawn around from either side and tied about the trunk.

To make him more secure the red fiends passed another piece of the rope about the tree and drew it tightly about his neck.

What they proposed to do with him the daring young deadshot did not know, but he was certain that he was to suffer some sort of torture at their hands.

If they had merely wanted him out of the way they would have killed instead of capturing him.

It was a young chief, who had been inclined to listen to the White Lily who had been the leader in the capture of the boy, and Dog-Face merely looked on as the captive was bound to the tree.

He gave an approving nod, however, when the knots were drawn tight, and when the younger chief started for one of the tepees he seemed to be more than pleased.

It so happened that the young chief was in love with the White Lily, and when he had done something that was real brave and daring in her judgment she was to name the day that the marriage was to take place.

The chief bore the name of Wounded Foot, and he had long been trying to do something that was stirring and original.

He knew only too well that the White Lily was watching all that was taking place from her tepee, and he meant to show how near he could come to killing the young paleface without harming him at all.

In a minute or two he returned to the spot with a bow and half a dozen arrows.

This particular bow had belonged to the grandfather of Wounded Foot, and was a sort of heirloom.

Guttural grunts of satisfaction came from the lips of the Kiowa braves as the young chief stepped off a few yards from the tree and fitted one of the arrows to the bow-string.

His powerful right arm drew the string back, bending the bow to almost its full capacity, and then—

Twang!

The arrow shot through the air and pinned itself in the tree less than an inch above the head of Young Wild West.

While it was still quivering where it had struck the bow was bent again.

Wounded Foot had a straight eye, and when the bow twanged again, the second arrow struck within a couple of inches of the other one, and then as quick as a flash he sent the third, landing it above Wild's shoulder, close to his neck.

The young chief drew himself up proudly as he fitted the fourth arrow to the bow-string.

Though he did not appear to notice it, there was a slight difference in the looks of the last arrow from the others he had used.

Among the short, grey eagle feathers attached to it there was a tiny feather of a blood red color.

As he raised the bow to shoot the fourth time a sudden interruption took place.

The White Lily suddenly appeared upon the scene.

"Stop!" she cried, placing herself in front of Young

Wild West. "The charmed arrow has pinned a lock of the hair of the paleface brave to the tree and he must now go free!"

If a troop of cavalry had dashed upon them at that moment the Indians could not have shown more astonishment.

Wounded Foot dropped his bow to the ground and stood motionless and silent, while the girl cut the ropes that held our hero to the tree.

Then she plucked the arrow that had grazed his shoulder and pinned his hair to the tree and handed it to him.

"Go!" she said. "You are free, and the charmed arrow is yours. It has been said that he who should be shot at with the charmed arrow should be a great brave and a chief among men. It has fallen to your lot."

"Thank you!" retorted Wild, picking up his rifle, which lay on the ground before him. "Now, miss, kindly set my friend who had his foot burned off free, also."

"I will do so, but not now," was the quick reply, in a voice that was hardly above a whisper. "He shall not be harmed. Now go!"

Our hero waited no longer.

He did not know at what minute the Kiowas would take it in their heads to go against the wishes of the White Lily, as they had in the case of Jack, and relying on her promise that Jack should be liberated later on and that no harm should come to him, he made a sudden bolt from the spot.

Wounded Foot, the young chief, had taken his revolvers and knife from him, but as he still had his rifle he felt pretty easy.

Wild had not run very far in the direction he had left Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart when he saw them coming along the river bank.

They were riding their own horses and leading Jack's and his.

It seemed a trifle strange to the boy that at least some of the Indians did not pursue him; but they did not, and a couple of minutes later he was with his friends.

"Who was it doin' all ther shootin'?" asked Charlie.

"I was," replied Wild.

"You must have dropped all of 'em, then?"

"No; there are plenty of them back there yet."

"What!"

"That's right."

"An they didn't foller you?"

"It seems not."

"Did you see anything of Jack?" spoke up Jim, who was as much amazed at what his chum had said as Charlie was.

"Yes; I found him. He will be coming through, minus his cork leg, before long."

The two looked at him in silence.

"I found the White Lily of the Kiowas, too," went on Wild, in his easy-going style.

"See here!" gasped Dart, "what are you trying to tell us, anyhow?"

"I haven't exaggerated a bit in anything I have said," was the calm rejoinder. "I found Jack and also the White Lily. They are both over there in a camp of the Kiowas—

the girl from her own choice, I take it, and Jack because he can't help himself. I had a rather narrow escape myself. See this?"

Our hero held up the arrow the girl had plucked from the tree.

"Yes," they assented.

"Well, that is supposed to be charmed. The White Lily gave it to me, after it had been shot into the bark of a tree so close to my neck as to make me feel a trifle squeamish. She gave it to me and then told me to be off."

"An' Jack is there yet?" queried Charlie, as though he could scarcely believe his senses.

"Yes; he is there. The White Lily promised me that he should go free in a little while, and that no harm should come to him. I've seen something real startling in the past few minutes."

"Well, I should reckon that you must have. Tell us all about it."

"I will; but I think we had better get to the cover of that fringe of trees over yonder. The redskins might change their minds and give us a fight, you know."

He leaped into the saddle and turned the sorrel's head in the direction indicated, the others following him with naught but wonderment pictured on their faces.

As soon as they reached the cover of the trees and taken a position where they could watch the grove where the Indian camp was, Wild related all that had taken place since he left them.

Both Charlie and Jim were overjoyed when they found that Robedee was alive, but they could not help smiling when they heard how he had lost his cork leg.

"We'll have to head for a settlement where there's a wheelwright shop to fix him up, I reckon," remarked the scout with a grin. "Jack was pretty cute to think of foolin' ther red varmints that way."

Young Wild West did not smile at this remark.

The truth was that he was vainly trying to think of what the outcome of the curious adventure of the afternoon was going to be.

He had met the White Lily of the Kiowas, and he had talked with her.

But to him she seemed to be the same as an Indian maiden with a tender spot in her heart would have been.

She was evidently satisfied to remain with the Indians and live as one of them.

But the fact of her wearing the garb of white women puzzled him.

Could it be that she really desired to live her days out with the Kiowas?

There was no clew to the identity of the little girl who had been stolen by the Indians years before, and it was mere supposition on the part of Wild that she was the one.

Bascom Walters, the uncle of the child, had informed him that her name was Helen Bradley.

And as she had been stolen when a child too small to remember much, how would the White Lily—if she really was the child—ever be able to give proof of it?

The only conclusion our hero could come to was to try and induce the girl to go to civilization and quit the company of the Kiowas.

The spot our three friends had selected to watch the little grove was not more than a quarter of a mile from it.

Wild knew they would have a good chance to get out of harm's way if the Kiowas did attempt to come after them, so he took the risk of waiting that close.

He was resolved to get Jack Robedee away from them at all hazards.

When fifteen minutes of waiting had passed he began making a close examination of the arrow the girl had given him.

Then it was that he saw the tiny red feather that was stuck to it.

"That must be what makes the arrow charmed," he said to his companions.

CHAPTER V.

JACK GETS FREE.

Charlie and Jim looked at the arrow and said if there was anything charmed about it they could not see where it was.

"Never mind," remarked Wild; "it may do us a good turn before we get through this trip we are on. I took note of the fact that the Kiowa braves seemed to be rather frightened when the White Lily told them that it had been the charmed arrow that had been shot at me. The young chief who was doing the shooting of the bow seemed to be more impressed than any of the rest. He acted as though he might be the girl's suitor."

"An Injun ther suitor of a pretty white maiden, like you say she is!" cried the scout in a tone of disgust.

"Well, I only say that from what I saw it looked that way."

Just then Jim, who was looking intently in the direction of the grove, exclaimed:

"Here comes Jack; and there is an Indian with him, or I'm getting color blind."

"It's an Injun that's with him, all right enough," said Charlie, as he turned his eyes that way.

Sure enough, two Indian ponies were cantering toward them, and on their backs sat Robedee and a redskin.

As they drew nearer Wild saw that the Indian was no other than the young chief who had shot the arrows at him.

"I wonder what is up now?" he remarked. "That is the fellow who shot the charmed arrow at me and pinned a lock of my hair to the tree. Maybe he is coming after it."

"Are you goin' to give it up to him if he is?" queried Cheyenne Charlie.

"No; the White Lily gave it to me, and as I am convinced that the Kiowas are superstitious about it, I am going to keep it."

As the two riders approached they saw that they were conversing as though on the most intimate terms.

The Indian was looking a great deal at Robedee's stump and Jack was evidently telling him something concerning it.

Pretty soon they drew rein in front of the three who were waiting for them.

"Hello, Jack, old boy!" called out Dart. "We are glad to see you alive, even if you have lost a leg."

"You ain't no more glad than I am," retorted Jack, as he gave the stump of the burned cork leg a hitch. "I thought I was a goner till I happened to hit on ther idea of showin' 'em how I could stand pain. Boys, this is Wounded Foot. He was 'p'nted by ther White Lily to escort me over here. He was afraid I'd tumble off ther horse with my one leg, I guess, an' that's why he got her to send him with me."

The young chief bowed his head to the three as he brought his horse to a halt.

"The paleface boy with the long hair has the charmed arrow," he ventured after a moment's silence.

"Yes," retorted Wild. "The White Lily gave it to me."

"Will the paleface boy with the long hair give it to Wounded Foot?"

"I can't do that," and Wild shook his head.

The chief looked disappointed.

Then he raised his eyes and spoke again.

"I have brought the paleface brave who cannot be hurt by the fire back to his friends. It is the wish of Dog-Face and the White Lily that the palefaces leave the hunting grounds of the Kiowas. The Kiowas are at war with the Comanches, and not with the palefaces."

"Chief," said Wild, ignoring the remark, "I want to ask you a question."

Wounded Foot bent his head, signifying that he was ready to listen.

"How long has the White Lily been with the Kiowas?"

"Many moons. Much more than a hundred."

"Does she wish to stay with the Kiowas?"

"She has promised to be the squaw of Wounded Foot some day," was the reply, as the Indian drew himself up proudly.

"Her father and mother were palefaces. Does she know who they were?"

The chief shook his head.

Then he cast a lingering look at the arrow which Wild had fastened to his coat by sticking it through the button-holes, and turned his horse around.

"Good-by, palefaces!" he exclaimed, and then he started his horse forward on a gallop, leading the one Jack had ridden from the Indian camp after him.

"This is what I call a peculiar state of affairs," Wild observed, turning to his companions. "It strikes me that we could not get the White Lily to leave the Indians if we wanted to, unless we took her by force. And that is something I do not propose to do. If she is in love with that chief riding over there, the only way to make her return to civilization is to get him to go, too."

"But because the chief says he is going to make the girl his squaw does not follow that she is in love with him, or willing to it," said Jim.

"That is true enough. But from what I saw in the camp over there, the White Lily appeared to be perfectly contented, and I saw her smile upon Wounded Foot when he lowered his head to her will when she bade him to let me be, as the charmed arrow had been shot at me."

"I didn't have a chance to notice much of anything about her," spoke up Robedee. "One thing, I know she was ther means of savin' me. She give ther old chief an awful talkin' to, an' he seemed glad to let me go after awhile."

"Well, Jack, what are you goin' to do for a foot an' leg now?" queried Charlie, as he looked at the charred stump Robedee was holding up.

"I don't know," was the reply. "That's what's botherin' me. I kin ride along all right this way, but when it comes to gittin' around on my feet I won't stand much of a show."

"There is a settlement about thirty-five miles from here," said Wild. "As soon as we can find out where the White Lily is going we will ride over there and get a wooden leg made for you, Jack. A common, every-day wooden leg will be much better than no leg."

"Oh, yes; I could git along with that pretty well, I guess," replied Robedee.

"How are you goin' to find out where ther White Lily is bound?" asked Charlie, turning to the young Prince of the Saddle.

Young Wild West touched the charmed arrow and smiled significantly.

"You think that arrer will give you ther chance to find it out?"

"Yes; since that young chief wanted it so badly I have come to the conclusion that it will be worth considerable to us. I rather think I would not be harmed by any of the Kiowas if I were to walk into their camp with the arrow in my hand."

"You ain't goin' to risk tryin' that, are you, after what Wounded Foot said?" questioned Robedee in surprise.

"I can't tell what I will try yet. The best thing we can do now is to go back to the place where we camped and take things easy till to-morrow morning, although it may be that I will take a notion to pay a visit to the Indian camp to-night, if they remain there that long."

Jack was assisted on the back of his horse, and then, as they rode back to the camping place, he told them how he had been so neatly tricked by the two Indians in the canoe.

"They sent them two redskins down to spot us out, an' they knowed jest how many friends I had with me," he said, in conclusion. "They must have seen ther smoke from our fires, or something."

"I wonder what object they had in making a prisoner of one of us?" Wild remarked thoughtfully. "If, as you say, they knew how many of us there were here, why did they not sneak down on us and take us by surprise? Here they go and rig up a scheme to drift down the river past our camp, and when they get sight of one of us sitting on a log they go and capture him. If they are really at war with the Comanches, and not the whites, as the chief said, they must have taken Jack a prisoner just for the fun of it."

"Well, there wasn't much fun about it," and Jack looked

at the remainder of his artificial leg ruefully. "If I'd known ther White Lily was goin' to set me free you kin bet I would never have let them burn my leg off."

Charlie grinned, but did not let Robedee see him.

It seemed comical to him, but he did not want to hurt Jack's feelings.

They soon got back to the place they had rested at during the noon hour.

"This seems to be as good a place as any to stop," Jim remarked, as he looked around. "We have a pretty good view up the river from here, and can see the Indians if they should openly approach us."

"Yes; but they ain't likely to openly approach us," retorted Charlie, with a shrug of his shoulders. "See how ther two came down ther river in ther canoe that was hid behind ther logs. I reckon we want to pick out a good tall tree that's easy to climb, an' one of us keep up it ther biggest part of ther time. Them Kiowas ain't to be trusted, even if they have got ther White Lily to sorter keep them down a little. It strikes me that we might as well go back, anyhow, an' report to Mr. Bascom Walters. Then, if he wants to see ther White Lily he kin come back with us. I reckon she won't be very hard to locate."

"We don't want to go back until we have tried to induce the girl to go with us," spoke up Wild. "If we can convince her that she should live with white people, we might learn something from her that will give us a clew to her identity. She may have some of the clothing that was on her when she was stolen by the redskins years ago."

"That's right," nodded Jack, as he hopped over into the thicket to cut himself a sort of crutch, so he could get over the ground better.

The afternoon was pretty well advanced by this time and Cheyenne Charlie began to think about the bear meat he had figured on having cooked for his supper.

He took the two haunches and hung them to a limb of a tree, and then when he had tied his horse with a lariat he lighted his pipe.

"I reckin I'll go up that tree over there an' take a look around," he observed, after a moment's reflection.

"Go ahead," replied Wild. "There is nothing like knowing what is going on around you. But I hardly think we will be disturbed by the redskins who have the White Lily with them. I guess this arrow I have here will protect us."

"Maybe it will, an' then maybe it won't."

After expressing himself thus, the scout picked out a suitable tree and proceeded to go up it with the agility of a squirrel.

He had not been there long when he called out excitedly for Wild to come up.

"What's the matter?" asked the boy, as he began ascending the tree.

"Nothin', only there's about a hundred redskins ridin' across ther prairie," was the reply.

"What!"

Then the boy quickened his movements, while Jim ran for another tree and hastened to climb it.

"I reckon I won't go up," remarked Jack, looking at his stump with a sad smile.

Wild was soon high enough in the tree to see that Charlie had not exaggerated in the least.

At the distance of nearly three miles off they could see a band of Indians moving rather slowly across the rolling prairie.

They were heading almost straight for the little grove where the Kiowas were encamped, it seemed to them, and when he had looked at them for a minute, Wild remarked: "They are not Kiowas, of that I am sure."

"Then they must be Comanches," spoke up Jim, who had just reached a point where he could see the band.

"That's about ther size of it," nodded the scout.

"And that means there will be some hot work going on pretty soon, if it is true that the Kiowas and Comanches are on bad terms."

"That is jest what's likely to happen, I reckon. Ah, there goes some one from ther Kiowa camp to meet 'em, an' if it ain't that white gal I don't know what I'm talkin' about!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE WHITE LILY AND THE RENEGADE.

When Cheyenne Charlie said there was about a hundred in the band of Indians that suddenly appeared making their way across the prairie in the direction of the Kiowa camp he was about right.

There was just about that number.

They were not all braves, either, for the chiefs had their squaws and papoosees with them.

The majority of the Indians had their war-paint on, but the fact of the squaws and papoosees being with them did not make it appear as though they really expected to do any fighting.

And they did not just then.

They were a band of Comanches under the lead of Rising Moon, a scarred veteran of many skirmishes with his red foes and the white settlers and cavalrymen.

Rising Moon was on his way to meet Dog-Face by appointment.

There were some difficulties existing between the two tribes, and these two had been selected to meet and try and settle matters in a way that would be satisfactory to both.

If they could not do this it would mean a war to the knife between the Kiowas and the Comanches.

The latter was the stronger of the two tribes, but they were as plucky as could be, and when they found that the Comanches were gradually infringing on the territory which they called their hunting grounds they resolved to put a stop to it.

Several skirmishes had taken place between the hunters of the two tribes during the past three months, and now both chiefs hoped to make an amicable settlement of the matter.

With the Comanches there was a villainous renegade white man.

His name was Simon Du Bois, and he was a deserter from the army, a horse thief and all-around rascal.

In looks the fellow would have passed for an honest man, save for the crafty, evil expression of his black eyes.

He was a very shrewd man, well used to the ways of the border, and having got on terms of great intimacy with Rising Moon from the fact that he saved the chief's life about a year before, he was recognized by the Comanches as a sort of adviser.

Simon Du Bois had heard all about the White Lily of the Kiowas, but he had never met her.

He wanted to meet her, too, for he had heard that she was very beautiful.

The spot where the camp of the Kiowas was situated had been selected by the chiefs of both tribes as a meeting place, and when the renegade Du Bois saw a white girl come riding toward them from the little grove of cottonwoods he was overjoyed.

"It's ther White Lily what's comin' to meet us, chief," he said, addressing Rising Moon. "S'pose I ride ahead an' meet her an' hear what she's got to say?"

"Simon speaks words of wisdom," retorted the chief. "He will ride to meet the White Lily of the Kiowas and tell her what we want."

Du Bois smiled with satisfaction.

He was yet a young man, and he hoped to make a favorable impression on the White Lily.

If he could succeed in wedding her, he felt that he would surely wield a great power in both nations.

As he rode out ahead of the straggling lines of the Comanches he smoothed his silken beard and arranged the collar of his shirt so he would be looking at his best.

He soon met the white maiden, who was riding a shiny black horse with the skill of an accomplished equestrienne, and doffing his hat, he came to a halt.

"You are the White Lily of the Kiowas, I presume," he said with all the politeness he could command.

"The paleface man speaks the truth," was the reply in a clear voice. "I am the White Lily."

"Rising Moon is coming yonder to meet Dog-Face, the great chief of the Kiowas."

"It is well," answered the girl, speaking with just a tinge of the dialect of the red man. "Dog-Face wants peace, not war, with the Comanches."

"I am Simon Du Bois, one of the main advisers of Rising Moon, and I assure you that I shall do my best to settle the difficulties between the two nations peacefully. White Lily, you are as beautiful as the rainbow that shines in the heavens after a storm. It makes my heart beat fast when I look at you. Your eyes are like the violets an' your cheeks are like ther mountain roses; you are ther loveliest girl I ever looked upon."

"Talk not to me like that," was the reply, though she showed that she was not at all averse to being flattered. "There are many white maidens who are far more beautiful

than the White Lily. The paleface man does not mean what he says."

"Yes, I do mean what I say," Du Bois went on. "I never saw a girl I could love till I saw you just now."

"And I have never yet met the brave I could love," she replied, quickly, "though I am to be the squaw of Wounded Foot when he has done something that is real pleasing and wonderful to me."

"You shouldn't marry a redskin, girl," the villain exclaimed, not the least abashed by what she said. "Your father and mother were palefaces, you know."

"Yes; I know," and a dreamy look came into her eyes. "My father and mother were white people, but I have been brought up with the Kiowas. They have been good to me and I have learned to love them as brothers and sisters. I love the rolling prairie and the wildness of the craggy mountains. I could not leave them and go to live where the paleface girls live. I would pine and die like a bird in a cage."

"You speak as one of my own heart. I, too, cannot live in the cities as the white people live. I must be in the open air of the prairie and mountains; the wind and storm is music to my ears, and ther sun, as it rises from behind ther mountains, is what guides me in my free life on ther plains. I live with the Comanches because I love the ways of ther red man."

Du Bois was beginning to wax real eloquent, and he was using the best language he knew how.

But he did not make a great deal of an impression on the girl, though she listened to him.

By this time the band of the Comanches had come to a halt about a hundred yards distant.

The renegade thought he had made pretty good headway with the White Lily and concluded to let that do till another time.

Turning in the saddle, he motioned for Rising Moon to come on.

The chief promptly obeyed the signal, riding up in a pompous manner and bowing to the beautiful white maiden.

She returned the salute gracefully, and then waited for him to speak.

He at once opened up conversation in the Indian tongue and she responded in a fluent manner.

When they had talked for five minutes she invited him to bring his followers and come to the camp of the Kiowas.

So far the negotiations between the two tribes were getting on nicely.

Five minutes later the band was riding toward the cottonwood grove, the braves putting on a very dignified appearance, and the squaws riding along in their usual listless manner.

The White Lily and Simon Du Bois rode ahead with Rising Moon following close behind them.

As they neared the camp, Dog-Face, Wounded Foot, and two or three more of the chiefs of Kiowas came out and bowed a greeting to their visitors.

Then an ugly-looking fellow of the Kiowa tribe struck into beating upon a rude sort of drum, and the braves of both bands whooped in unison.

A few minutes later the two chiefs were in a close and friendly conversation.

"Dog-Face is a great and noble chief," said Rising Moon. "It was wise of him to agree to meet the chief the Comanches selected to come here."

"Rising Moon is all-powerful, and it is wise in him coming here," was the quick reply.

They conversed in the Indian tongue, as it might be supposed, and the way they did compliment each other for awhile would have made a white person smile.

But that was the redskin way of it, and they would go through it before the real business came to order.

At the end of half an hour they had decided that a council should be held and their grievances set forth and determined by it.

Each chief then appointed three chiefs under them to act, and the council went into session.

Then the real trouble began.

Argument after argument was put forth in regards to where the boundary line should be, and each side stuck to what they thought was right.

At the end of two hours they were no nearer settling it than they had been at the start.

Then by mutual agreement a recess was taken, and the fires to cook their evening meal were started.

Simon Du Bois had taken no part in the council. He had not been selected by Rising Moon, as he was not a chief of the tribe.

But the renegade had not been idle concerning the love-making to the White Lily.

He had come in contact with her just after the council went into session, and he had been with her all the time.

He talked to her of the way the white people lived, it being the first time she had ever heard so much about the ways of civilization.

"The White Lily dresses like the palefaces in the towns," he said.

"Yes," she answered, "but not until a year ago, when one day I saw some white women in a wagon train, and they gave me dresses for a bag of gold dust I had dug from the mountains a hundred miles to the west of this place. I like the dresses of the palefaces, and as I am a paleface with a Kiowa heart, it will not harm me to wear them."

"Harm you! I should say not. You look just beautiful, you do!"

"Don't say that. It makes me think I would like to go to the big cities where the palefaces live in houses and see how they do it. But I would have to come back to the Kiowas again, if I did," she added, dreamily.

"I will take you to a big city, White Lily. Become my squaw, and I will take you to the big city of Denver, where the houses are as tall as the tree-tops, and cars are pulled along on iron rails by horses. It would be grand for you to see all that."

"It would be grand!" she said, with sparkling eyes. "But it cannot be, for I am to be the squaw of Wounded Foot."

"Wounded Foot be hanged!" thought the villainous rene-

gade. "I'll fix him before he is many days older. Then I'll have plain sailin', an' ther White Lily will be mine."

There could not have been a more innocent girl than this white beauty who had been brought up by the Kiowas.

She knew no more of the ways of the world than a little child, and as the spark of love had not yet kindled in her breast, she was but a child, after all.

When Du Bois talked of marrying her, she only listened because what he said about taking her to see the big cities was pleasing to her.

And it was the same way with Wounded Foot.

When he talked love to her in Indian fashion and told her how bright her eyes were, and all that, she simply listened because it was the way of the Kiowa maidens to listen.

But there came a strange feeling in her heart sometimes, and the older she grew the more often it came to her.

The spirits and instincts of her race were gradually asserting themselves, though she was not aware of it.

Du Bois talked on with the girl till the recess in the council took place, but he failed to get her consent to marry him.

And while the renegade was breathing all this into the ear of the White Lily a pair of glittering black eyes were watching him as a cat watches a mouse.

The eyes belonged to Wounded Foot.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LEGEND OF THE CHARMED ARROW.

Young Wild West very readily came to the conclusion that the Comanches and Kiowas were meeting by appointment when he saw the White Lily escort the band of redskins to the camp in the cottonwood grove.

He also decided that he must know something about it, and when darkness set in he informed his partners that he was going to take a ride in the direction of the camp.

"If I am gone longer than three hours you may take it for granted that something has happened to me," he said, as he buckled the saddle girths about his horse. "It would not be a good idea for more than one of us to go over there. I have the charmed arrow, you know."

"All right," answered Cheyenne Charlie, speaking for the three. "You go ahead, an' if you don't show-up in three hours we'll start out an' look for you. You had better bring ther White Lily back with you, if you kin."

"I'll do that, if I can. But I have an idea that she would not come of her own free will. She has been with the redskins so long that she is well wedded to their ways."

"If you could see her and tell her all that Bascom Walters said about the little girl being stolen by the Indians some years ago, perhaps she might get interested enough to consent to leave them," remarked Jim.

"Well, you can depend upon it I will do my best to induce her to leave them if I get a chance to talk to her."

As our hero said this he vaulted into the saddle.

The next minute he was riding from the camp in the direction of the other grove up the river.

Wild was resolved on seeing the girl and having a talk with her.

If she was surprised at seeing him come back to the camp he was going to tell her that he had come back after the weapons that had been taken from him by the Kiowas.

Then he would have an excuse for not doing as she had directed him to.

It was really a daring thing he was up to.

The Indians might take it that he was spying upon them for the purpose of reporting their meeting at the nearest fort.

But he never once thought that there was any danger or risk in his making the scouting trip.

Anyhow, he was itching to try the effect of his having the charmed arrow in his possession.

Wild's horse seemed to enjoy going out alone.

On such occasions he had more control over the intelligent animal than any other.

He could safely set him loose and proceed where he was going on foot and find him when he came back, or call him, if need be, by a whistle.

Spitfire would not answer to a whistle made by any other than his master, no matter how near it sounded like the call.

He knew the difference, while a person might not have been able to detect it.

If ever a horse was under the perfect control of its master it was the beautiful sorrel stallion.

Young Wild West would not have sold him, even if an almost fabulous sum had been offered for him.

As he rode along he patted Spitfire on the neck and talked to him in a low tone.

"Spitfire, old boy, I am going to let you run loose," he said, "when I get within a couple of hundred yards of the Indian camp. I want you to stay right there, and look out you don't run among the redskins. I may want you in a hurry, so if you hear me whistle for you, you must hurry up."

Of course the stallion did not understand this, but every time his master talked to him in that tone he answered with a low whinny, and as he did it on this occasion, Wild was satisfied that he knew that something important was expected of him.

Our hero was not long in reaching the spot where he proposed to dismount.

It was on the bank of the river not very far from the spot where he had met Charlie and Jim when he returned from the Kiowas, after being captured by them and then released by the White Lily.

When he dismounted he left his horse in the cover of a narrow frings of trees, and patting him on the nose, told him in a whisper to stay there till he came back or whistled for him.

Instead of whinnying, Spitfire put out his foot and pawed the ground.

He knew that the whisper meant that silence must be maintained.

The next minute Wild was moving along the bank of the Arickaree Fork for the camp of the Kiowas and their visitors.

He went with the utmost caution, for he did not want to fall into their hands, if he possibly could help it.

He had his rifle and one revolver and a knife that he had borrowed from Charlie and Jim with him.

Not knowing just how he was going to get an audience with the beautiful white maiden, but feeling sure that he would, he crept closer to the camp.

That the redskins did not care who saw their campfire was more than evident, for it blazed up brightly between the trees in the grove, and served as a beacon to light Wild on his way.

In five minutes he was so close to the camp that he had to proceed with the utmost caution lest he run against one of the guards.

But the guards had merely been placed there as a form that night.

Both tribes of Indians were at peace with the whites just then, and they were not afraid of being attacked by other Indians.

Therefore the braves who had been appointed to act as sentinels simply walked and sat about to kill time.

Young Wild West soon located the tepee he had seen the White Lily come from.

It would be dangerous work for him to attempt to reach it, but he was going to try, for all that.

That was the only way he could meet and have a talk with the White Lily of the Kiowas.

He came to this conclusion after he came in view of the camp, and saw that the girl was not to be seen anywhere.

In order to reach that particular tepee he would have to pass very close to several of the redskins.

But before making the attempt he took a good look at the camp.

He noticed that the Comanches had pitched their tents and tepees a trifle off to the right of those of the Kiowas.

It was really what might be called a double encampment, since each party were by themselves and cooked their meals by different fires.

The Comanches outnumbered the Kiowas by about two to one, and they had more squaws and papooses with them.

They had all washed off their war-paint, and this made Wild think that they must have become very friendly.

After he had made a thorough inspection of the place and found out just how the land lay, he started to make a circle toward the tepee of the White Lily.

So noiseless was he in his movements that not the snapping of a twig could be heard as he proceeded.

Around he went, slowly but surely reaching a point he had decided upon that was right behind the tepee.

Twice he came within an ace of being discovered by Comanche guards, for he had taken that side to go around.

It was tedious work, but after awhile the half circle had

been made, and he paused in a clump of bushes that was less than a dozen feet from the back of the tepee.

Wild now paused and listened.

He was just about to make the attempt to reach the tepee when he heard a slight noise very near him.

As slight as the noise was he knew it was made by a human being.

Wild dropped flat upon the ground.

The next moment he saw who it was that had made the noise.

It was a man attired in a garb of a hunter or scout.

It was not an Indian, for the faint glimmer of the fire that was burning a few yards off shone on his face as our hero looked, and he saw a beard.

Wild was astounded.

What could this man be doing there?

He determined to remain perfectly quiet and find out.

He was not aware of the fact that there was a white man in the camp.

When the White Lily had escorted the band of Comanches into the Kiowa camp the distance had been too far for our friends to distinguish that Simon Du Bois was not a redskin, though they could very readily make out the form of the girl.

Consequently Young Wild West was very much puzzled.

His first thought was that it was Cheyenne Charlie, but in an instant he knew better.

The scout would never do anything like that.

He was a man who always did just as Young Wild West directed on any and all occasions.

Wild had told him to remain in camp until three hours had passed.

Then if he had not shown up Charlie and the others would know that possibly something had happened to him.

If that time had passed he would surely have thought it was Charlie.

But only a short interval of the allotted time had gone by, and that made it certain that it was not the scout.

Young Wild West almost ceased breathing when he saw the man begin to move toward the tepee.

He knew he had not seen him, otherwise he would not have moved his body so soon.

Less than six feet from the stranger, our hero waited developments.

Nearer got the crawling man, and then, just as he reached out his hand to touch the skins of the tepee, a startling thing happened.

An Indian launched himself from somewhere out of the darkness and landed on the white man's back like a panther.

A startled exclamation came from the under fellow and then a desperate struggle began.

It was no other than Simon Du Bois who had attempted to reach the tepee of the White Lily.

And the Indian brave who had sprung upon the villain from the darkness was Wounded Foot, who had become very jealous of the paleface who was making love to his bride-to-be.

There was one thing about it that was very strange to Wild.

The Indian had not the sign of a weapon in his hands when he leaped upon the white man.

But this was probably due to the fact that Wounded Foot did not want to kill the renegade for fear it would affect the settlement of the dispute that was between the two tribes.

But Du Bois was going to kill the Indian that had attacked him so suddenly if he could, and by a quick movement he broke the hold of the angered redskin and drew his knife.

But at that moment there was a rustling sound, and who should appear upon the scene but the White Lily!

The red glow from the distant fire flashed full upon her form, and as Young Wild West crouched close to the ground in blank amazement, he was struck with the thought that she made one of the loveliest pictures of real life that his eyes had ever gazed upon.

The two belligerents caught sight of her at the same time, and though she spoke not a word, they let go the holds they had upon each other.

With flashing eyes she looked upon them in silence a moment, and then waving her hand in the direction of the Comanche part of the camp, she said in a voice that was just above a whisper:

"Go where you belong, paleface! Wounded Foot has saved your life, for if you had dared to enter my tepee I would have killed you like the wolf that you are!"

The renegade was much abashed and ashamed of himself, and without the least word of a reply, he got up and slunk off in the direction she pointed.

"Now, Wounded Foot, you go, too," she said in the language of the Kiowas. "The White Lily can take care of herself."

Though Young Wild West did not understand the words, he knew their import well enough.

Wounded Foot bowed in a humble manner to the queenly looking girl, and then stalked off to his own tepee.

The White Lily remained standing there until he was out of sight, and then turned to go back to her quarters.

"Hist!" exclaimed Wild, at that instant.

She turned quick as a flash, a look of fright on her beautiful face.

"The charmed arrow!" said the daring young dead-shot in a low voice.

He was afraid that she might cry out, and then he would be placed in a bad position.

And when he mentioned the charmed arrow he could not have done a wiser thing, for instantly the look of fear vanished from the girl's face and was replaced by a look of wonder of surprise.

"I have come to talk with the White Lily for a few minutes," Wild went on, as he slowly raised himself to his knees. "She will not be angry with me."

"It is the young paleface brave with the long hair. He has the charmed arrow," she answered, as though she could scarcely believe her senses.

"It is."

"Why did you come here, when I told you to go away from the hunting grounds of the Kiowas?"

"I came to get my revolver and knife, and also to have a few words with you," our hero said boldly, for he was now pretty well at his ease.

"You took much risk to come here after your weapons," she answered. "But I will get them for you, for he who has been touched by the point of the charmed arrow is free to come and go as he pleases. He must not be harmed by the Kiowas, unless he first harms them. He is one who will be a leader among men of his own kind, and he will do great deeds and win many victories. The charmed arrow has never lied once, and it has been in the possession of the Kiowas for more than a hundred years."

"Sit down, White Lily. Sit in the shadow of your tepee, so you will not be seen standing there by the braves around the fires. I want you to tell me about the charmed arrow."

As he expected, she seemed perfectly willing to do this.

When she had made a pretext of entering the tepee and placed herself in the shadow she said :

"The charmed arrow is one that has a history. There has been what the palefaces call magic about it, and there is yet. It was given to a young chief over a hundred years ago by a medicine man who came from the clouds. He was told that as long as he possessed the arrow his life would be charmed and that he would never be killed in battle when he was fighting in the right. It was true till one day he shot the arrow at a foe and the point of the head touched a part of the foe's body.

"The chief had made a mistake, for the great medicine man who came down from the clouds had told him that if the arrow was ever shot at anything human, the one thus touched would become possessed of a charmed life, and the one who shot the arrow would lose the charm forever and be like other men.

"And so it proved, for the foe who got possession of the arrow fought and won all his battles for many years after that, while the chief was killed by a bear not long after he made the great mistake. But one day the brave who owned the arrow shot it at his brother in a fit of rage, and then the charm was lost to him and went to his brother. And that is the way it has gone for generations. Never once has the charm failed. You are the one who bears the charmed life now, and no matter should the arrow be taken from you, or whether you lose it, the charm will remain. The only way you can lose the charm is to shoot the arrow at some human being, and if the point so much as touches his body or the hair that is on his head he will become the possessor of the charmed life and you will lose it."

Though our hero took no stock in the story it was interesting, nevertheless,

And what made it more so was the fact of his being in such a peculiar position to hear it.

"Then," said he, "the arrow must have belonged to Wounded Foot."

"It did. The charmed arrow was shot into the thigh of

Wounded Foot by his father as he lay dying. He did it purposely, so the charm might not be broken. Wounded Foot got it by mistake when he shot at you to-day, and though he seems not to care much, he has lost the charm he had upon his life and given it to the young paleface brave with the long hair. It was right that you should come back here to learn the history of the charmed arrow, I suppose. I am glad you came."

"And so am I," answered Wild. "I am glad to become the possessor of such a valuable curiosity as the charmed arrow. You may rest assured that I will never pull back a bow-string with it."

"It is yours to do as you like with, my paleface friend," was the reply.

"See here," and Wild showed how earnest he was by bending close to the girl. "You address me as your paleface friend. You are as much of a paleface as I am. Have you no recollection of your father or mother?"

He was getting down to the point he was anxious to talk on now.

The girl shook her head.

"You ought to know that your parents were not like the people who have brought you up in this wild state," he went on. "Your face and figure show that you were not intended for such a life as you are leading."

"I love the prairie and the wildness of the mountains," and again she shook her head.

"How did you learn to speak my language?"

"From a squaw who had been brought up with the palefaces."

"Did this squaw get tired of living with the palefaces and come back to her own people?"

"She did. The quiet life and to be in a house all the time wore heavily upon her, and at last she could stand it no longer and came back to live with her people."

"Ah! have you never thought that you will some time want to go back to your people and live as they live?"

"I have no people but the Kiowas, and they have always treated me so well that I could never leave them. But yet——"

"Go on," said Young Wild West.

"I sometimes think that I should live like the white people."

"And the older you get the more you will think that way. Can you read?"

"Only the writings of the Kiowas and the Shoshones and the Comanches."

"But you speak good English."

"The one who taught me to had an education in the school of the palefaces."

"And yet she did not teach you to write."

"I did not want to learn."

"Well, White Lily, have you any faith in what I say?"

"More faith than any one outside of the Kiowas that I have ever spoken to," was the reply.

"Well, let me tell you, then: Years ago you had a gentle, patient mother, who reared you from a nursing babe to a charming little girl of three. You had a father, who was

handsome and active and ready to die for you. These two brought you to the Wild West to better their condition in life, and one day the Indians came and killed them both. Then the same red men who slew them took you and brought you up as one of their own. Now, which do you think is the best for you—to remain with the slayers of your parents, or go back to civilization?"

The girl did not answer right away.

She appeared to be deeply agitated, though.

Then she said:

"You act as though you know what you are talking about. Do you mean what you say?"

"I do."

"It cannot be. I have always been told that I was found on the prairie, where I had been abandoned by my pale-face parents because I was in the way."

"Well, I will tell you different. Your parents were slain by the same people who took you and brought you up. Have you nothing that was on you or with you when you were brought to live with the Kiowas?"

"Yes; I have something that the squaw who knew me from the time I was first brought to the village of Dog-Face gave just before she died a few months ago."

"What is it?"

"It is a gold chain, with a three-cornered piece of silver hanging to it."

Young Wild West gave a start.

According to the story of Bascom Walters, the child stolen by the Indians had such a piece of jewelry about her neck.

He was now certain that he had found the lost child.

"White Lily, will you go back to your people with me?" he asked, earnestly. "I know who your parents were, and also that you were brought to live among the Kiowas by the very ones who cruelly murdered them. Will you come with me to the home of the paleface relatives who will care for you as you should be cared for?"

Wild had become so interested in what he was saying and listening so that he talked louder than he should have done.

He had lost his usual caution for the time being, and it was not until two stalwart Kiowa braves sprang upon him and bore him to the ground that he realized it.

Once more he was in trouble.

CHAPTER VIII.

WILD'S FRIENDS IN HARD LUCK.

Young Wild West's three partners waited anxiously for his return until after the three hours had expired.

They had been keeping a constant watch for him during the time, and now they felt certain that he had gotten into trouble.

"Well, there's only one thing for us to do," said Cheyenne Charlie.

"And that it to go and look for him," added Jim.

"That's right," chimed in Jack. "I can't do much, though, if there's got to be any foot-work or crawlin' done. I could git along a good deal better if ther burned stump of ther leg was off, but I want to keep ther strap an' fixin's to it so I kin have 'em put on a wooden one as soon as we git to a place where there's a carpenter or wheelwright shop."

"Well, I reckon it's easier to carry ther stump right along as you've got it now, then," said Charlie.

"I know it is, an' that's why I ain't took ther blamed old thing off."

The three lost no time in getting their horses ready.

But before mounting they waited a little while, and Charlie gave the hoot of an owl two or three times in a way that Wild would be sure to recognize who it was if he was within hearing.

But there was no reply to it.

"Ther redskins have got hold of him, jest as sure as you live," remarked the scout, as he got into the saddle.

"Well, it is our business to help him get away from them, then," retorted Jim, as he assisted Jack to mount.

Then he got into the saddle himself, and Charlie led the way in the direction Wild had taken.

They had not gone more than half the way when they suddenly heard the sound of approaching hoofs.

There was more than one horse coming, so they knew right away that it was not Wild returning, unless he was being pursued.

And that could not be, for when they listened they found that whoever it was coming, they were in no great hurry.

Our three friends turned off to the left, bringing their horses down to a walk.

They did not want to run right into the midst of the approaching horsemen.

They had scarcely made this move, however, when the sharp cry of warning from a Comanche warrior rang out.

They had been seen!

"Now, boys, look out for a lively time! There's more'n a dozen redskins in that bunch," said Cheyenne Charlie. "I reckon they mean business, too. I guess ther best thing we kin do is to ford ther river."

They had turned their horses, and were now on a full gallop for the river bank, and yelling fiercely, the Indians came after them.

No shots were fired until the three reached the river bank and boldly made their horses plunge into the stream.

Then half a dozen shots rang out.

The bullets flew high over their heads, though, and the scout gave a grunt of satisfaction.

If they could get to the other side there was cover for them in the clump of trees he could see on the bank.

Fortunately the stream was not wide at that point, and neither was it very deep, except in the center where the channel ran, and they got across in a jiffy.

As their horses clambered up the bank some more shots were fired, and Jack felt the singe of a bullet as it cut off a lock of hair.

Then all three turned in the saddle and fired two or three shots apiece into the ranks of the Indians.

More than one death-cry rang out on the night air, so they knew that their shots had not been entirely wasted.

"After 'em, boys!" cried the voice of a white man, and the three were much surprised.

"A renegade with ther Injuns," said Charlie. "Now, we have got to look out for fair. He's jest ther sort to keep 'em comin' after us. We'd better keep right ahead an' trust to our horses to git us away from 'em."

"That's the idea," retorted Jim. "And every now and then we must fire at the fiends and try to thin them out. That renegade of a white man who is with them ought to be the first to drop."

"I'll fix him if I kin only draw bead on him," spoke up Robedee.

They had now reached the level prairie.

The splashing of the horses of their pursuers as they plunged across the stream came to their ears, and then they knew that it was going to be a race for it.

There had been at least a score of the Comanches and one white man in the party that had come upon our three friends.

Two of the redskins had fallen, causing the others to be more anxious than ever to catch the three scouts.

It was Simon Du Bois who was leading the Comanches.

After being driven to his camp by the White Lily he had hung around in a meditative manner until suddenly there was a great confusion among the Kiowas.

Then word came to him that a young paleface had been caught in the camp while talking to the White Lily.

Dog-Face had ordered him to be tied to a tree until his fate was decided upon.

The renegade became much interested when he heard this.

He asked a few questions, and learned that the prisoner had three friends somewhere in the close vicinity, and also that he was in possession of a charmed arrow that would prevent the Kiowas from killing him.

It struck Du Bois that it would be a good idea to go out and hunt up the three companions of the prisoner.

He went to Rising Moon and told him all about it.

The chief told him to go ahead and do as he liked.

This is how the renegade and his party of Comanches happened to come upon Charlie, Jim and Jack as they were on their way to hunt up Young Wild West.

Now that he had met with a loss, Du Bois was determined to catch the scouts.

He was certain they were the three friends of the prisoner Dog-Face had, and he was now itching to get them back to the camp and treat them to a little torture.

What the Comanches could not think of in the way of torturing a captive, the renegade could.

He was quite a genius, as well as a heartless, cruel man.

But the thing to do now was to catch the fugitives.

Du Bois rode a good horse and the redskins with him were all well mounted.

But so were our three friends.

The pursued rode on, gaining slightly.

As no shots had been fired at them since they crossed the river, they did not fire any.

When they had covered a quarter of a mile they looked back and saw that their pursuers were spread out like a fan and coming on with dogged tenacity.

In the dim starlight the renegade could not be distinguished from the redskins.

So Jack did not fire a shot, as he wanted to do.

On they went at a very swift pace.

Presently another quarter of a mile was covered.

But their relentless pursuers could still be seen.

"I think we could do better if we commenced to pop 'em over," remarked Jack. "Ther horses they've got are good ones, an' it is bound to come to a fight before long, anyway."

"All right, Jack. I guess you're right," answered the scout. "I——"

That was all he said just then, for at that very instant their horses struck a treacherous marsh and began to flounder about in their efforts to go ahead.

The result was that all three riders were thrown.

"Poof-pooh!" sputtered Robedee, who struck on his face and got a good mouthful of mud. "This is what I call hard luck."

"An' it will be worse than hard luck if we don't git ther horses out of here," added Charlie, as he got himself into an erect position and began to pull his horse back.

Already the animals were in knee deep, and frightened at what had happened, they struggled in a frenzy to get out of the marsh.

Just then a hoarse yell of delight came from the pursuing redskins.

They saw that their intended victims had dismounted, and it was quite probable that they knew the cause, for the noise the horses made was loud enough to be heard a long distance.

"It's comin' now, boys!" Cheyenne Charlie exclaimed, gritting hard upon his teeth. "We've got to fight for fair now."

"Well, let's get out of this place, then," retorted Jim Dart, speaking coolly. "We won't stand any show here. Ah!"

Jim had succeeded in getting his horse out of the mire. Just then a volley was fired from the redskins.

The bullets whistled all around the heads of the three who were so badly cornered.

Jack's horse gave a snort of agony and rolled over on the marsh.

A bullet had touched a vital spot in the animal.

Dart ran back and dragged Robedee from the ooze.

"Oh, if Wild was only here!" he thought. "He would find a way out of this scrape, I am sure."

But Wild was not there, and, in fact, they knew not whether he was alive or dead.

The scout had got his horse out of the soft spot now, and making the animal lie down before him, he began shooting at their foes as he knelt upon the ground.

The Comanches were riding back and forth, hanging low

over the necks of their horses, so as to escape being made targets of.

At irregular intervals a volley would be fired by them.

The three kept on firing, however, and at the end of five minutes they had only succeeded in emptying one saddle.

"This won't do," said Charlie, shaking his head sadly. "It's a hard thing to do, but we've got to surrender. It'll be our only chance of learning the fate of Wild, I reckon, for it are more than likely that they've got him a prisoner in ther Kiowa camp; an' if there is anything in the charmed arrer, an' ther White Lily's power among ther reds, we might git out of it. What do you say?"

"Let it be surrender, then," answered Jim.

"Yes; for I can't do anything much," added Robedee. "I never felt ther need of my lost leg so much as I do now!"

"Hey, you fellows!" called out the scout in a loud voice, as there came a lull in the firing.

"What's ther matter?" was the quick answer.

It was the renegade.

"You're a white man, I guess."

"I am."

"Well, what are you goin' to do with us if we surrender?"

"I don't know. That will have to be decided after we git you back to our camp."

"We ain't done nothin' to you fellers."

"Oh, no!" was the sarcastic rejoinder. "Only shot three good Comanche braves, that's all."

"But you fellows attacked us first."

"That makes no difference."

"There is no use in arguing with him," said Jim in a low tone. "Tell him that we will run the chances and surrender."

"All right," and then Charlie again called out:

"We are willing to take our chances with you fellers. Give us your word that you won't fire on us, an' we'll come out there."

"All right. Come on!" was the retort.

Holding their revolvers ready for instant use, in case there was treachery on foot, the three moved away from the marsh toward the Indians.

But they had not covered more than ten feet when they saw the advisability of putting Jack on one of the horses.

He was hoisted to Jim's saddle, and then they went straight to the waiting band.

Ten minutes later they were securely bound, with Jim on a horse that belonged to one of the slain Indians, and moving for the double camp in the cottonwood grove.

CHAPTER IX.

JACK'S GREAT PERIL.

Young Wild West was taken completely by surprise when the two Indian braves sprang upon him.

It was one of the few times in his adventurous career that he had forgotten to act with caution.

The conversation with the White Lily had been so interesting that he had really forgotten where he was.

He was quickly disarmed as a frightened scream came from the lips of the girl, and the next minute a crowd of Kiowas came rushing to the scene.

"Let the paleface go!" said the White Lily, as soon as she calmed down a little. "Let him go, I say! He is the owner of the charmed arrow."

But the Kiowas would not listen to her.

It was evident that they regarded her with suspicion, since she had been conversing with the paleface when the two braves discovered him.

Straight to the tepee of Dog-Face they conducted him, and just as they reached it the old chief came out in a state of great excitement.

"Ugh!" he exclaimed, when his eyes fell upon the captive. "So the paleface boy has come back to us, has he? Well, he must not be allowed to go free again."

At this juncture the White Lily pushed her way to his side.

"The paleface boy with the long hair came back to learn the history of the charmed arrow," she said, dramatically. "Wounded Foot shot the arrow at him by mistake and it pinned his hair to the tree. The arrow is sacred to the memory of the great medicine man who came down from the clouds, and it must be revered by the Kiowas."

This was said in the Indian tongue, and Wild could only guess what it meant.

But he saw that it had no little effect on the braves.

The chief, too, seemed about to give in to the girl, but by a great effort he threw off all such a feeling, and angrily ordered her to go back to her tepee.

"If you harm a hair of the head of the young paleface with the long hair a rain of fire will descend from the clouds and burn the Kiowas as the leg was burned from the paleface man to-day!" she cried. "He has the charmed arrow, and if he is harmed the magic spell will be broken."

"The White Lily will go back to her tepee. The paleface boy will not be harmed, but he shall be tied to a tree till daylight. He must remain a prisoner in the hands of Dog-Face as a punishment for coming here without the knowledge of the Kiowas. Dog-Face has spoken."

Wild was looking at the girl when this was said to her, and when he saw her face relax into an expression of relief he felt just a trifle easier.

She said no more, but went directly to her quarters.

Then our hero was led to a tree and bound securely to it.

It was the second time in twenty-four hours that he had been in that fix.

Nothing daunted, however, he looked around as though amused at what he saw.

All was excitement in the Kiowa part of the camp, but where the Comanches were it was comparatively quiet.

But he had not been there over an hour when he saw the white man who had been trying to get into the tepee of the White Lily saddling his horse.

Then he noticed a lot of the Comanches doing the same thing.

A feeling of uneasiness came over the young Prince of the Saddle as he saw these preparations.

They were going out for some purpose.

And what purpose could it be but to hunt up his partners?

He was confident that the villainous white man had heard all about his capture, for he had seen him peering through the bushes at him shortly after he was tied to the tree.

"I hope they are not going after Charlie and the others," Wild muttered. "They will be waiting over there in the camp for me to come back, and when the three hours are up they will set out to hunt me up as I told them to do. That will be just about the time the Comanches and that renegade fellow get there, if they ride in that direction. It will be warm work for my partners if they happen to come together."

Pretty soon he saw them ride off.

There were twenty or more of them, and that made the boy feel that his chums were surely in danger.

It was quite likely that some of the Kiowas had told them all about him and how many friends he had.

One thing that Wild was glad of was that the red fiends had not taken the arrow from his coat.

It was there as he had placed it after showing it to his friends that afternoon.

He began to think there was some sort of charm about the arrow, as far as the superstitious feelings of the Kiowas went, anyhow.

Beyond the fact that a couple of the Indians had been selected to stand guard over him little or no attention was paid to him.

The minutes flitted by.

It was tiresome to stand that way, but if he sagged his weight any the ropes about his body and neck would cut into him, so there was nothing for him to do but to stand the torture, for torture it certainly was.

After what seemed to be a long time he heard the shouts of approaching redskins, and then he knew that the party which had gone out some time before was returning.

Their shouts told him plainly that they were elated over something, and then his spirits sank.

Could it be that they had succeeded in finding Charlie, Jim and Jack, and wiping them out?

But he was not long kept in suspense, for three minutes later the redskins and their white leader arrived in camp, and when Wild saw that they had three prisoners with them his heart gave a bound, while a sigh of relief escaped his lips.

While he recognized the prisoners as being his partners, he was relieved to know that they had not been killed.

"While there is life there is hope" is an old saying, and a true one, too, and that is the way Young Wild West looked at it.

The three prisoners' arrival of course attracted the attention of the whole crowd of Indians.

Both Comanches and Kiowas ran to the spot to have a look at them.

And when the braves of the latter named tribe recognized Jack Robedee they set up a cry of disapproval.

This was puzzling to the Comanches, and they wanted to know what it meant right away.

Then one of the young chiefs who had been in the council told them how the paleface had let Dog-Face burn off his foot, and how he had laughed and sang for them while it was burning.

There was the stump to show that the foot had really been burned off, and when the Comanches looked at it they shook their heads in a puzzled way.

But Simon Du Bois had made an examination of that stump shortly after taking the three prisoners, and he knew what was the matter.

He had seen such things as cork legs before.

He resolved to show the Kiowas what fools they had been to think that the man had suffered pain while his foot was being burned off.

But he did not say anything just then.

Young Wild West, though nearly fifty yards distant, could see everything that was going on.

The trees happened to be few and far between in that portion of the big double camp.

He knew what the excitement was when the braves gathered about Robedee in a curious manner and made all sorts of exclamations in their own language.

Pretty soon Rising Moon, the chief of the Comanches, came out to have a look at the man who had allowed his foot to burn off while he sang and laughed at the Kiowas.

Then Dog-Face was sent for, and when he corroborated all that had been said concerning Robedee all hands were filled with wonder.

That is, all hands were with the exception of Simon Du Bois.

He smiled softly to himself and waited.

Pretty soon Dog-Face turned to Rising Moon and advised that Robedee should be set free, as he was more than mortal man.

At this the renegade stepped over and whispered something in the ear of the chief.

Rising Moon gave a grunt of satisfaction, and then turning to the Kiowa chief, said:

"Dog-Face has burned one foot from the white man who feels no pain; now Rising Moon will burn the other, and then his braves can see that the Kiowas have not crooked tongues when they tell such great things about the pale-face."

Though our friends could not understand this, they were quite certain that something was being arranged that was not at all to their benefit.

The renegade made known what was in the wind very soon, though.

"You three fellers are a nice lot, ain't you?" he observed, with a sneer. "You had to come nosin' around among ther redskins till you got yourselves in trouble. We've got the whole four of you, now, and we are goin' to have some fun with ther one-legged feller before we put ther finishin' touches to you. We're goin' to burn ther other foot off this

feller here, an' we want to hear him sing an' whistle while it's burnin'."

Wild heard the words only too plain.

He realized that unless something extraordinary happened, Jack Robedee would be ruined for life, even if he was not killed.

He resolved to appeal to the girl in the tepee that was not far away from the tree where he was tied.

"Come out, White Lily," he said, softly. "Come out at once. I have the charmed arrow and I want to talk to you."

As low as he had spoken the words they had been heard. The next minute a figure emerged from the tepee.

It was enveloped in a coarse blanket, but Wild knew who it was.

Straight to the tree the figure advanced.

"What do you want?" she asked in a low tone, for it surely was the White Lily.

"I want you to get me my weapons and cut me loose from this tree, and then help me to save my friends over there. The Comanches are going to burn my friend's other foot off, and if they do that he may as well be dead, for he will never be able to walk again."

The girl remained silent for a moment.

"For the sake of the charmed arrow of the Kiowas I will do as you say," she said in a dreamy voice. "It must be done! It must be done!"

Then she glided away.

The attention of the entire camp was directed upon the three prisoners that had been brought in by Du Bois, and not a redskin had seen or heard what passed between our hero and the girl.

Meanwhile there was quite a discussion going on between the chiefs of the two tribes.

The Comanches were for burning off the other foot of Jack, and the Kiowas were for letting him go.

But the Comanches finally won.

Robedee was seized and carried to an open spot that was considerable nearer to where Wild was tied, and then a stake was driven into the ground.

Jack was tied to this in a manner similar to that in which he had been that afternoon.

Dry brushwood was brought to make a fire, and as the Indians were placing Jack's foot in position so it would burn readily, Wild looked anxiously for the appearance of the White Lily.

The next moment he saw her gliding toward him, the folds of the blanket wound tightly about her body.

Without a word she stepped nimbly up to him and severed the rope that held him to the tree.

Then she placed his rifle and belt that contained his revolvers and knife in his hands.

"Go!" she exclaimed, in a low, pleading voice. "I will save your friend with the one leg."

"All three of my friends must be saved, White Lily!" Young Wild West declared, looking her straight in the eyes.

"I will try to save them."

"And I will help you!"

CHAPTER X.

WHAT THE CHARMED ARROW WAS THE MEANS OF DOING.

The White Lily did not answer Young Wild West, but throwing off the blanket, she hastened to the spot where the Comanches were about to set fire to the pile of brushwood on which Robedee's foot rested.

Jack was white as a sheet.

He was not acting anything like he had that afternoon when he had let the Kiowas burn off his cork leg.

This was an entirely different matter.

When everything was in readiness Simon Du Bois produced a match from his pocket and struck it.

"Now, why don't you sing us a comic song?" he asked, fiendishly, as he touched the flame to the dry brushwood. "This ain't a cork leg that's goin' to burn, old man."

"I know it ain't," answered Jack. "What are you—a demon, or what?"

"I'm anything you want to call me," was the calm reply. "Ah! now you'll commence to sing in a minute!"

The fire was burning up now, and it would be only a question of a short time before Jack would be suffering the direst agony, unless the fiendish work was stopped.

It was stopped just then, for like a whirlwind the White Lily rushed to the spot, and with her own hands swept the burning brush aside.

"This must not be!" she cried in the language of the Kiowas. "I, the White Lily, say that this man must go free!"

Du Bois looked at her aghast.

She appeared very beautiful to him just then, and thinking there might be a chance for him to win her if he allowed her to have her way, he bowed low and said:

"As you will, White Lily. I am here to obey you!"

At this she gave him a smile that penetrated to his very soul—if he had such a thing—and then he thought he had really won her love.

While the Indians looked on in astonishment the girl severed the thongs that bound Robedee to the stake.

Then she assisted him to get up.

"Get a horse and leave at once!" she exclaimed.

"I reckon I'd better," answered Jack. "I don't stand much show to put up a fight, with only one foot to stand on."

He hopped over to where the horses were tied.

At that moment Rising Moon spoke.

"The paleface must not go. He must have his other leg burned off!"

"See here, chief!" and Du Bois caught him by the arm. "This is all for the best. Don't you see that the White Lily has fallen in love with me, an' if I marry her we'll have things our own way with the Kiowas."

This was said in a whisper.

The chief did not see at first, but when it was explained he gave in.

But while he was understanding it the way his white ad-

viser did, the one-legged man was getting well on the road to escape.

Jack had untied the first horse he struck, and he had the bridle on the animal when Rising Moon called out for him to go on away from the camp.

"How about ther rest of ther prisoners, White Lily?" asked the renegade, taking off his hat to the girl.

"If you wish to please the White Lily, let them go. We are not at war with the palefaces, and we do not want to be, unless they make trouble for us. Let the prisoners go, if you would try to win the heart of the White Lily."

This was said in a tone that was loud enough for almost every one in the camp to hear.

And there was one who heard it who fairly boiled with hate and rage as the words came to his ears.

This was Wounded Foot, who had been ordered to his tepee by the girl a few hours before.

Like a ghost he stalked out into the shadow of the trees, a gleaming knife in his hand.

The young chief was bent on murdering the white renegade, even if it started a war between the Kiowas and the Comanches!

Young Wild West saw what was in the air, for he was but a short distance away when he saw Wounded Foot emerge from the tepee.

Wild thought it about time he found his horse.

But he did not want to whistle for him till he was sure that his partners were going to get out of the muss they were in.

So far they were doing well.

At that moment Jack rode slowly away from the camp.

Then our hero heard the White Lily order the renegade to have the horses of the other prisoners brought out.

After a short consultation with his chief he turned and told one of the braves to do as the girl directed.

The next minute Charlie and Jim were liberated.

They took off their hats to the White Lily and then took the bridle reins of their horses as they passed over by the brave who had placed the bridles on the steeds.

The next minute they were in the saddle.

"Give them their weapons," commanded the White Lily, who was now satisfied that she could do about as she pleased in the matter, as far as the Comanches went, anyway.

This was done, though rather reluctantly.

Both Charlie and Jim had seen Young Wild West tied to the tree when they were brought into the camp, and they now looked over to where he had been tied to the tree.

But he was not there now.

"It's all right!" whispered Jim, without looking at his companion. "The White Lily has attended to Wild first."

"Good enough!" was the reply.

Then they turned their eyes upon the beautiful girl, and she gave the signal for them to ride off.

They did not wait an instant, but followed in the direction Jack had taken.

When Wild saw this he hastened around the edge of the camp to find his horse.

As soon as he was a hundred feet away from the camp he uttered a whistle that would call Spitfire to him, if the intelligent animal was within hearing.

The echoes of the call had scarcely died out when he heard the stallion galloping toward him.

But at the same moment a yell of rage and pain went up from the camp behind him.

Wild recognized the voice as that of the renegade, and he knew what had happened.

The young chief who was so jealous of him had attacked him.

Our hero feared for the safety of the White Lily, but he knew it was no place for him just then, so he hastened forward to meet his horse.

Just as he came upon Spitfire the hoarse warwhoop of the Comanches rent the air.

It was followed almost instantly by that of the Kiowas. Hostilities had begun between the two tribes.

"Hello, old fellow!" our hero said, pausing long enough to pat his horse on the neck. "You were not far away, were you?"

Then he vaulted nimbly into the saddle and hastened to overtake his companions.

As he rode swiftly along he heard yelling and shooting going on in the camp he had just left, and he made up his mind that there was a hot time there.

In a couple of minutes he heard a signal which he recognized as coming from Cheyenne Charlie.

He promptly answered it and then rode on.

The next minute he came in sight of three horsemen, whom he knew were his partners.

"Here I am!" he called out.

"Good!" came the reply.

The shooting and yelling at the Indian camp now died out as quickly as it had begun.

Wild could not understand this, but he made up his mind not to try and investigate that night.

He was glad for one reason.

If the fighting had continued, the White Lily might have lost her life.

"Well, Wild," said the scout, as they rode hurriedly for their camping ground, "this night beats anything I've ever gone through with Indians. That's ther first time I was ever let loose by a gang of red demons what captured me!"

"The White Lily did it all," spoke up Jim.

"But it was the charmed arrow that caused the White Lily to do it," Wild observed. "I have got the arrow yet, and I wouldn't part with it for a great deal now. It is a relic many a person would pay a great price to get hold of."

They rode on back to their camp, and on the way they told what had happened to each other.

"It is about as lively a day as I ever put in with Injuns, I guess," observed Jack.

Some remarkable incidents certainly had taken place.

But our friends were used to about everything that was going on in the Wild West, so they did not let what had happened bother them a great deal.

They concluded to take the risk of remaining in the grove till morning, so after arranging it so one of them would be on guard all the time, they turned in.

The next morning, shortly after sunrise, they were up and stirring.

Young Wild West climbed a tree and took a look in the direction of the Indian encampment.

A column of smoke was ascending skyward, which showed that at least one of the tribes were there.

After scanning the prairie in almost every direction Wild turned his gaze up the river.

The water glittered in the light of the morning sun, and as he looked upon it he suddenly saw a canoe come down the stream.

The little craft was not exactly drifting, for the sharp eyes of the boy could see a moving paddle, though it was difficult to see the person who was handling it, so low in the canoe did he crouch.

Wild became very much interested.

"Come up here, boys!" he called out to those below. "There is a canoe coming down the river."

"Is that so?" queried Jim. "Well, I guess I'll take a look at it."

Up he went, and then Charlie quickly followed.

"You fellers kin tell me all about it when you come down," remarked Robedee, as he looked at the stump of his ruined cork leg.

The three watched the canoe for fully ten minutes.

Though it was coming slowly, in that time it got pretty close to them.

So close that they could see that there were two forms in it.

One of the forms was lying in the stern of the craft in what might have been termed a confused heap, and the other was crouching in the bow and working the paddle.

Half a minute later the canoe was lost to sight, for a fringe of bushes ran from that point clear to the cottonwoods in which the four had pitched their camp.

"We will get down and hail them when they get opposite our camp," observed Wild, as he started to descend the tree.

"That's what's ther matter!" exclaimed Cheyenne Charlie. "Somethin's in ther wind, I reckon!"

"There is something wrong in that canoe; you can depend on that," said Wild. "We had better get ready for something to happen, I guess."

Down the tree he came in a hurry, followed by the other two.

"What's ther matter?" queried Jack.

"A canoe," retorted Charlie. "It might be that we'll light out kinder quick like."

Wild hastened to the bank of the river.

He knew the canoe would be due there in a minute or so.

And he was not surprised when he saw it come around a bend just then with an Indian brave paddling like mad.

Just then the other form in the boat arose to a sitting posture and looked anxiously up the river.

It was the White Lily of the Kiowas.

CHAPTER XI.

THE COMANCHES ARE WHIPPED.

Wounded Foot was mad with jealousy when he started to put an end to the life of Simon Du Bois, the renegade.

All the savage ferocity of his race was aroused and he meant to make short work of the man who was trying to steal his promised bride from him.

He did not care what happened after. He was simply thinking of revenge now.

If the White Lily wanted the renegade white man for her husband she would never have him.

Wounded Foot was soon near enough to Du Bois to commit the deed of murder.

From behind a tree he rushed with uplifted knife.

But just as he struck the blow that was to end the scoundrel's life Du Bois saw him.

Then he dodged aside.

The blade that was intended for his heart struck the fleshy part of his left arm and pierced it clear through.

Both the head chiefs of the two tribes saw the act.

And many of the Comanches and Kiowas standing about saw it also.

The Comanches uttered their fierce warwhoop and rushed to the assistance of the adviser of their chief.

Then the Kiowas took it up for Wounded Foot, who was very popular with some of them.

The White Lily had gone back to her tepee as soon as she had succeeded in gaining her point, and she now came out and saw that there was about to be a struggle between the two tribes.

When they began to shoot they went back into her quarters.

She did not want to be struck by a bullet.

For perhaps five minutes a general fight was in progress and several of both sides fell.

Wounded Foot slunk off like a whipped cur.

The young chief was heartily ashamed of himself, now that he saw the effect of his rash act.

But both Dog-Face and Rising Moon were pretty good diplomats, and they saw the inadvisability of continuing hostilities just then.

They began calling upon their braves to stop fighting, and in a little while they succeeded in quieting them.

Then they held a short consultation and agreed to settle matters the next morning.

A line was drawn across the double camp, and no one was suppose to cross it into the territory of the other till the two chiefs met and decided what was to be done in the morning.

Wounded Foot went off into the bushes and rolled himself in his blanket.

Then he lay down to brood over what had happened.

The Kiowas all knew that he was to take the White Lily for his squaw, and they thought he had done right in trying to take the life of the white renegade.

When daylight came Wounded Foot crawled to the tepee of the White Lily and scratched gently upon the skins.

Almost instantly the flap was thrust aside and her face appeared.

"Why did you not come before, Wounded Foot?" she asked.

"I was afraid the White Lily would not smile upon me," was the reply.

"You tried to kill the bad white man, Wounded Foot," she went on, without noticing his remark. "You made a mistake."

"Does the White Lily want him for her husband?" he asked, his eyes kindling with fire.

"No."

"Ah!"

The Indian's face softened instantly.

"The White Lily talked to the bad white man sweetly to make him save the lives of the palefaces," she resumed. "The charmed arrow made me save them all. Now Wounded Foot has made a war between the Kiowas and the Comanches. Unless he does as the White Lily tells him we will all be killed, as the Comanches number more than we do."

"What does the White Lily want me to do?"

"Go and tell Dog-Face to come here at once."

"I will do it."

Wounded Foot hastened away, and in less than a minute returned with the chief of the band.

Dog-Face showed signs of having passed a sleepless night.

He was very much worried over the trouble that had arisen between the two tribes.

"Has the White Lily any advice to offer?" he asked, as he stepped into the tepee.

"Yes," was the quick reply. "Unless we get help the Comanches will kill us all before sunset. We must have some braves to help us."

"How can we get them?" and the chief shrugged his shoulders.

"Let us go and get the palefaces to help us."

"The palefaces we let go away last night?"

"Yes; the White Lily will get them to help fight the Comanches. The young paleface with the long hair can fight a dozen Indians. He knows no fear and can shoot so straight that many of the Comanches will fall in a short time when he starts to fight. I will go and get them to help us. Wounded Foot will go with me; we will use the canoe to go down the river to the camp of the palefaces."

"The White Lily speaks words of wisdom," said the old chief, after a moment's thought. "She will go at once. She will tell the paleface braves to help us fight the Comanches. Then, when the White Lily and Wounded Foot have got to the camp of the palefaces, I will get my braves together and tell them that we must keep from fighting till the palefaces come. Dog-Face has spoken."

That was all that the White Lily wanted to know.

"Come!" she said to Wounded Foot, and then they hastened to the banks of the river where the one canoe that the band had brought with them was moored.

It was the same the two Indians had used when they cap-

tured Jack Robedee, and was amply large enough to accommodate four, if necessary.

The two got in the little craft and went paddling noiselessly down the river, while no one, save a very few of the Kiowa warriors, knew of their departure from the camp.

When Young Wild West and his partners suddenly appeared on the bank of the river before the White Lily and Wounded Foot the girl gave a cry of delight.

She had not been certain as to where the camp was, and that was why she had risen in the canoe to look around.

"I have come to see the young paleface brave with the long hair," she said. "He has the charmed arrow and his life is safe. Will he do the White Lily a kindness?"

"What is it, miss? I am sure that we owe you a whole lot, and if I can do anything for you I shall be only too glad to do it," replied Wild, as he tipped his sombrero to her.

"Will you help the Kiowas fight the Comanches?"

"If you want us to we surely will."

"I do want you. If Dog-Face does not have help the braves of Rising Moon will kill all his warriors. If you will come to the camp right away Dog-Face will never forget you."

"Well, we will go. But it is not on account of Dog-Face, it is to oblige you. Come, boys! Get the horses ready and we will go at once."

The face of the White Lily lighted up with joy when she heard this, and Wounded Foot grunted with pleasure.

Young Wild West recognized the young chief, and turning to him, he said:

"Did you kill the bad white man?"

"No," answered the chief, shrugging his shoulders; "I missed him, but I will not the next time."

"Turn the canoe up the river, Wounded Foot," spoke up the girl. "You must be there to help fight the Comanches."

The little craft was turned around and started swiftly up the river.

Neither Wounded Foot nor the White Lily cared to hide their movements now.

They had done the errand they had started upon, and now they wanted to get back as soon as possible.

Our friends soon got their horses ready and mounted.

Then they set out without stopping to get any breakfast.

It was rather a peculiar sort of errand that they were on, but Wild felt that they were duty bound to help the cause of the White Lily.

Swiftly the four rode in the direction of the Indian camp.

When half-way there they suddenly heard the report of firearms.

Hostilities had been resumed at the camp.

"We must hurry, boys," our hero remarked. "The Comanches outnumber the Kiowas two to one."

All four unslung their rifles and got ready for business.

They had not covered more than a hundred yards when they saw a number of squaws come running out of the grove ahead.

They had their papposes with them, and were in a great fright.

They were those belonging to the Kiowa camp, and their sudden appearance showed that Dog-Face was getting ready to retreat.

"That's a good move on ther part of ther squaws," said Cheyenne Charlie; "but I reckon Dog-Face will do better if he stays in ther grove. There's plenty of trees there for him to keep his braves behind."

"My! But they're gettin' in real lively now," observed Robedee. "Well, in a couple of minutes we'll be able to take a hand in ther game."

They were letting their horses go at full speed now, and Young Wild West rapidly drew ahead.

Pretty soon he was near enough to see the Indians among the trees.

The Kiowas were being forced toward the river bank, but were returning the fire of the Comanches with a vengeance.

When the squaws saw the four riding swiftly to the scene of battle they uttered shrill cries and waved their hands excitedly.

In another minute Wild was near enough to see the difference between the two bands of redskins.

Then he fired a shot that dropped one of the Comanche chiefs.

That was a signal for his partners to begin.

Crack—crack—crack—crack!

It was a deadly fire that they poured into the ranks of the redskins, and coming as it did from a different direction, the Comanches at once became demoralized and made themselves easy marks for the Kiowas.

"Whoopee! Whoopee!" yelled Cheyenne Charlie, and then his companions took up the cry.

Their rifles cracked as fast as they could sight them now, and making a swerve so as to catch the Comanches on the flank, they rode around the edge of the grove with the speed of the wind.

For the next ten minutes there was hot work on the banks of the Arickaree.

But in spite of their numbers, the Comanches were gradually being whipped.

The fierce warwhoops of the opposing factions and the discordant shrieks of the squaws mingled with the cracking of the firearms, and made a truly hideous sound on the morning air.

Slowly but surely the Comanches fell back, and after them pressed Dog-Face and his braves.

In another five minutes they took to their horses and fled for the open prairie.

The victorious Kiowas followed them up, sparing none whom they came upon.

They even started in to kill the squaws.

But then Young Wild West rode down amongst them.

"Stop it!" he cried. "Leave the squaws alone!"

Dog-Face was close enough to hear what he said, and he at once called his warriors off.

"Do as the young paleface with the long hair says," he ordered.

And they did, too. If they had not, the bullets of the whites would have been turned upon them, even as they had been upon the Comanches.

The Kiowas did not pursue them far.

They were elated at the victory which had only been made possible by the timely arrival of Young Wild West and his three partners.

The Kiowas had lost about half their number, but their foes had suffered far worse than that.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

Our friends did not dismount, but kept riding around through the camp, telling the Kiowas what to do with the wounded, and endeavoring to straighten things out generally.

Young Wild West was looking for the White Lily and Wounded Foot.

It was time they were there.

Riding out of the smoke, he looked down the river.

The canoe was coming on as fast as the strong arms of the young chief could propel it, and in the stern sat the White Lily, an anxious look on her face.

Then Wild suddenly caught sight of a form sneaking toward the river bank through the trees.

It was not that of a redskin.

That he saw at a glance.

A moment later he saw who it was.

It was no other than Simon Du Bois.

The renegade must have been left behind in some way when the Comanches beat a retreat.

His wounded arm was in a sling and he was minus his hat, showing that the villain had taken part in the struggle.

But what was he up to now?

There could only be one reason that he was sneaking toward the approaching canoe, Wild figured, and that was to get his revenge upon the young chief he regarded as his rival for the hand of the White Lily.

Even as Young Wild West sat in the saddle watching him Du Bois raised his rifle and leveled it at Wounded Foot.

The canoe was less than a dozen yards from him now, and neither the young chief nor the girl saw the villain crouching behind a tree near the water's edge.

Wild was just going to try a shot at the renegade when he saw him throw down his rifle in an angry fashion.

It was evidently empty.

Then with a hoarse yell on his lips, Du Bois drew a revolver and ran out, shooting as he went.

But there were only two shots left in his weapon, and dropping that, he drew his knife.

Neither of the bullets had hit Wounded Foot, and seeing his foe, he dropped the paddles and sprang waist deep in the water and hurried to meet him.

The renegade reached the edge of the bank, and then he leaned over, waiting for the brave who had tried to take his life in such a cowardly way.

Wild could easily have shot Du Bois, but did not.

There was a sort of fascination about the scene that caused him to look on in silence.

The two had a grudge, and each was going to pay it, if he could.

The Indian reached the bank, the fire of hatred gleaming in his eyes.

Then it was that Du Bois made a fierce lunge at him, and losing his balance, toppled over in the water.

But the blade had struck Wounded Foot in the shoulder, inflicting a very painful wound.

Both went below the surface, and as they did so the White Lily pushed the canoe to the shore and sprang out.

Just what she meant to do will never be known, for at that moment Young Wild West stepped up to her and took her by the hand.

"All is well, White Lily," he said. "The Comanches have been defeated and victory is on the side of Dog-Face and his warriors."

She gave a glad cry, and then turned her attention upon the river again.

The two foes had come to the surface in a deadly embrace.

The blood from Wounded Foot's wound was staining the water a deep crimson.

Both had lost their knives in the sudden plunge, and they were now simply fighting to drown each other.

It was a terrible fight, too.

Neither of them had the use of more than one arm.

It was going to be a struggle to the death.

But it did not last long.

Just as the White Lily implored Young Wild West to go

to the rescue of Wounded Foot they both went under the surface, the Indian on top.

And they did not come up again.

"White Lily," said our hero, looking earnestly at the girl, "are you going with me to your uncle?"

She looked at him for a minute and then answered:

"I will go and see him, but I will come back to the Kiowas again."

"Good! That is all I ask. I promised him I would look for you, and if I found you, would bring you to him."

"You promised my uncle that?"

"Yes."

"How did you know the man was my uncle?"

"He told me the little child that was stolen away by the Kiowas had the chain you say you have. When I saw you had the chain I knew I had found you. All I told you about your father and mother being killed by the Kiowas is true. Go to your tepee, White Lily, and get what you wish to take with you. You may come back to the Kiowas again when you choose, you know, but you had better take all the things you love with you, for fear they will be lost when you get back."

"Paleface with the long hair, you have never told me your name. What is it?"

"I am Young Wild West."

"The greatest brave the White Lily has ever seen!"

With that she ran in the direction of the camp.

Wild mounted his horse again and rode back to where his three partners were.

They had been watching him while he was talking with the girl, and three minutes later they were not surprised when they saw her come out of her tepee and go to her horse.

She mounted, and without a word to any one, rode off to the prairie.

The Kiowas thought nothing of this, as she was accustomed to riding out alone.

Young Wild West knew what the girl's action meant.

She did not want the Indians to know that she was taking leave of them and was going away with the palefaces.

"Good-by, Dog-Face," said Wild, turning to the old Kiowa chief. "We are going back to the home of the palefaces now. May you be a good chief and live long and let the palefaces alone hereafter."

"Good-by, paleface brave. You have the charmed arrow of the Kiowas, and you are sure to live long. Dog-Face and his warriors are thankful to you for what you have done."

That was all the leave-taking there was.

The next minute the four were galloping rapidly over the prairie.

They did not go in the direction the White Lily had taken, but kept straight for the camp they had left to assist the Kiowas to do battle.

When they got there they were soon joined by the girl.

"I am going to the home of the palefaces," she said. "I belong there, I suppose, but I love the prairie and the mountains, and the Kiowas have been good to me."

There is little more to add.

A few days later our friends reached the town where Bascom Walters was awaiting them.

The only thing to prove that the girl was really his niece was the chain that had been around the neck of the child.

She had preserved this, and when he said there was no mistaking it, the White Lily took it for granted that she was Helen Bradley, as he claimed she was.

Whether she ever went back to pay a visit to the Kiowas we do not know, but when Young Wild West left her she seemed to be pretty well contented with her surroundings.

Before starting back for Weston Jack Robedee got a carpenter to make him a wooden leg in place of the one he had lost, and then he appeared to be in a much easier frame of mind.

Wild took care not to lose the charmed arrow, which, he declared, he was going to keep as a valuable relic.

THE END.

Read "YOUNG WILD WEST'S GREAT ROUND UP; OR, CORRALING THE RANCH RAIDERS," which will be the next number (43) of "Wild West Weekly."

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